



Everything you need to know about how to make the most of St. Valentine's Day in Beijing.

Pages 21-24



The Spring Festival Supplement will answer your every need, desire or question during the lunar New Year celebration.

Pages 9-20

BEIJING TODAY

今日北京



FRIDAY FEBRUARY 8/15, 2002

NO. 40

CN11-0120

HTTP://WWW.YNET.COM



Afghanistan



Australia



Austria



Belgium



Bulgaria



Canada



Chile



Cuba



Denmark



Egypt



Finland



Greece



Indonesia



India



Italy



Morocco



Malaysia



Mexico



Nepal



Netherlands



Norway



New Zealand



Pakistan



Poland



Russia



South Africa



Sweden



Switzerland



Turkey



the USA



Yugoslavia

Season's Greetings

Spring Festival, the Chinese people's most important celebration, will be here in four days. Ambassadors and chief representatives of 32 countries extend warm greetings to our readers through *Beijing Today*. For their messages, **see page 12.**

Foreigners Erect Friendly Holiday Banner

Student group sends defiant 'lao wai' pride message to city

By Sun Ming/Su Wei

"Foreigners wish Beijingers a happy new year," declares the red banner atop a CCTV transmission tower in Beijing Yuetan Park.

This 8-meter-long, 9-meter-wide message in white characters was posted to the city on Sunday by a group of 32 foreigners, mainly students, from 11 countries including the USA, Germany, Poland, Canada, Italy and New Zealand.

Banner designer and organizer of the activity Gido Rosler said the group wants to extend its blessings to the Chinese for the upcoming traditional holiday.

"I hope to call on more people to devote themselves to cultural communication among different nations," said Rosler, a German student of Capital University of Economics and Business.

"We [foreigners] are cultural ambassadors," he said.

The Chinese characters "老外" ("old outsider", perhaps most literally) are written on a bridge in the banner.

Rosler delights in being a "lao wai", a label sometimes said to be demeaning to foreigners.

"Eighty percent of foreigners don't think 'lao wai' is a good phrase because many Chinese would not say this word in front of them. They think that word does not show respect to them.

"People should neutralize this word," he said.

"In addition, in terms of Chinese civilization or Chinese people's habits, I think foreigners should see China through the eyes of the Chinese instead of their own eyes."

Rosler said that was why he had adopted the title

in the banner. "I hope more foreigners in Beijing will grow to accept it." The two ends of the bridge stand for western and eastern culture, he explained.

Sunday's activity is the first of several planned to strengthen communication and culture exchange between foreigners and Chinese organized by Rosler

and his friends. Last year, they initiated "Foreigners Support Beijing's Bid" and collected 12,008 signatures from more than 100 countries.

The group has also sent 10,000 New Year cards to ordinary Beijingers. The cards, also designed by Rosler, have the same content as the banner, except that an extra line of Chinese characters appears above the bridge: "国际友人" (international friends).

Rosler said he regrets they can't send New Year cards to every Beijinger.

He and his friends waded through Chinese telephone books choosing the places that they believe best represent ordinary people: universities, government departments, companies and hospitals.

"We are grateful to the many Chinese friends that helped us write and send so many cards," said Rosler. "Without their help, it would be impossible for us to do the big job."

Asked how much it all cost, Rosler refused to answer. "I don't want you to write that," he said.

Rosler stressed all money involved was raised by themselves. "I don't want people to think we are for money. We are non-political and non-corporate."

"All we have done comes from the heart."

Beijing Today will not publish on February 15. The next issue will be on February 22.



The banner in Yuetan Park

Photo by Guo Tieliu

City Launches Investor Data Release System

By Xiao Rong

Investors in Beijing have gained access to more open and detailed information through a system of public release of economic data ever since February 5.

The system, which was sponsored by the Development & Planning Committee of Beijing, was the first kind of the effort.

As one of the significant measures to guide and promote social

investments, the system aims to provide investment-oriented suggestions and macro policies for investors by publicly announcing current economic data. The final decision as to whether to take the risk of investing, however, is up to the investors themselves.

Detailed data in five areas of Beijing was referred to at the meeting, including the real estate industry, golf course construction, the

plan and construction of car markets, the development of Beijing Investment Platform and the inspection system of the city's key construction projects.

A bidding system for juridical persons will also soon be set up for all government-investment projects, according to Shen Baochang, director of the Committee.

"The construction of Olympic venues in Beijing are among the

first experimental ones to adopt the bidding system, which can guarantee the competitiveness of government projects from step one," said Mr. Shen.

International investors who are interested in the projects can feel free to participate in the bid, announced Mr. Shen, and the bidding data will be released to the public through the release system in time.

"The release system can act as a

new means of regulating the investment market by the government," said Mr. Shen, "Since an online investment platform of economic data has been established, investment data will be issued to guide future investment and prevent risks."

Shen also said that the establishment of Beijing's economic data release system would contribute to the transparency of the government policy-making.

First Applicant for Three-Year Visa

By Ivy Zhang

Xu Mao has become the first high-tech and senior management personnel in the Zhongguancun Science and Technology Park benefiting from the new visa policy as effective from February 1.

Expiates can apply for a one to three year visa at the Division of Exit-Entry Administration of the Beijing Municipal Public Security Bureau, according to the new policy. While in the past, only a six-month to one-year visa was issued.

Xu Mao, an American Chinese, is president of Beijing QQ Technology Co., Ltd., which is a new US-based company specializing in router chips and registered at Zhongguancun Science and Technology Park late last year.

"IDG is the major investor of our company and some of our board members are from IDG. IDG has been in China for more than ten years and always faces the visa problems, having to get expariate visas renewed every half a year," said Zhang Ruixue, the office manager of QQ company.

"We learnt about the new policy from the web and newspaper and called Zhongguancun for details," Zhang said, "Since we are the first case, the specific process wasn't crystal clear to us at first."

The Management Commission of Zhongguancun Science and Technology Park is responsible for documents review. Zhang says she failed to present the appointment letter certifying the identity of Xu Mao, which drags things out a bit in the beginning.

ning.

After submitting the complete set of credentials on January 27 and getting them reviewed, Zhang got the approval to apply for a three-year-visa on February 1. She would apply for an emergency process as the current visa of Xu Mao, her boss, expires on February 6.

"It usually takes four working days to get a visa done at our division. For emergency application, the length of the process would be set case by case," said Pang Jiang, director of Division of Exit-Entry Administration of the Beijing Municipal Public Security Bureau.

Check list:

Documents to present to The Management Commission of Zhongguancun Science and Technology Park:

- New-Tech Enterprises Certificate issued by Beijing Science and Technology Commission

- Appointment letter issued by corporation or labor contract

Papers to present to Division of Exit-Entry Administration of the Beijing Municipal Public Security Bureau:

- Photocopy of business license

- Photocopy of passport

- Physical examination letter

- Work permit

- 2 photos

- An approval paper from Management Commission of Zhongguancun Science and Technology Park

Contact numbers:

- Beijing Exit-Entry Division of Beijing Public Security Bureau: 8401 5295

- Zhongguancun management commission: 6891 5719



The Embassy of the People's Republic of China to Afghanistan resumed its functioning on Wednesday after being closed for nine years. Chinese Deputy Foreign Minister Wang Yi said the resumption opens a new page in the relations between the two countries. Afghan Foreign Minister Abdulah expressed his gratitude to the Chinese government for the political support and financial assistance in his address at the ceremony. (Xinhua)

Beijing Reconfirms Aim to Host Best Ever Olympics

The Beijing Organizing Committee of the Olympic Games (BOCOG) made its first official appearance at the 113th session of the International Olympic Committee (IOC) in Salt Lake City on Monday, reconfirming its commitment to delivering the most successful ever Games in 2008.

"To host outstanding games, we will realize the three themes of Green Olympics, High-tech Olympics and People's Olympics," said Liu Qi, president of Beijing Organizing Committee, also Mayor of Beijing.

Under the themes, Beijing will emphasize environmental protection of the Games, apply the most sophisticated technologies to their organization, and put on an athlete-oriented games with a strong flavor of Chinese culture.

While providing the best conditions for the Olympic family, Liu said that Beijing also attaches great importance to the post-games usage of Olympic facilities and financial prudence in venues construction and games operation.

The Chinese Olympic Committee (COC) has also expressed its wishes that they will closely work

together with the Olympic family and build on experiences of the previous host cities to ensure a successful games in 2008.

IOC president Jacques Rogge praised the Beijing organizers for the pace in preparing for the 2008 Olympic Games. "We will be on your side, and we look forward to excellent cooperation," he said.

Hein Verbruggen, chairman of the IOC's Coordination Commission of the 2008 Olympic Games, who had just found out that 2002 is the Year of Horse in the Chinese lunar calendar, said that since Beijing was chosen for the Games last July, its preparation for the Games has been going "at a galloping pace".

He said that the post-games utilization of the Olympic venues had been "very, very carefully considered" by the Beijing Organizing Committee, and that environmental protection was still one of the focuses of the organizing committee.

"That leaves no doubt that the commitment made during the bid will eventually leave a very positive environmental legacy for the future," he added. (Xinhua)

Universities Adopt Foreign Teaching Materials

By Shan Jinliang

Students who are not majoring in physics from Tsinghua University, Beijing University and some 30 other Chinese colleges and universities will from next semester study original-version physics textbooks from the U.S. California Institute of Technology.

"Our press has published two kinds of physics textbooks," said Zhang Wending, deputy editor-in-chief of Beijing University Press, "we are planning to publish almost 100 kinds of foreign textbooks in the next years."

"With a more practical approach, the textbooks will offer students a western way of thinking, rather than the traditional Chinese angle," said Qu Ding, editor of the physics books.

These textbooks will be introduced on a trial basis after a speech made by Lu Fuyuan, deputy minister of the Ministry of Education in a teaching reform symposium last December when out-of-date computer and other major teaching materials aroused wide concern. A number of the

current college teaching materials contain out-dated knowledge, a big gap with teaching materials of the overseas famous universities in management, nanometer technology, genetics, information and some other fields, experts say.

In this regard, the Ministry of Education required the use of bilingual teaching in higher learning institutions, particularly in information, biology, new material technology, finance, law and other WTO-related majors. The ministry says 5 to 10% of a bilingual curriculum will be popularized in college teaching in three years.

Out of the 1,440 courses of Tsinghua University, over 50 are taught in original English teaching materials, and 500 core courses will adopt this kind of textbook. Beijing University has adopted foreign teaching materials among 20% of all its courses.

50 courses in Tsinghua University are taught from freshmen right up to postgraduate students, and the pure bilingual teaching is a great challenge for

most fresh college students. Over 130 students from Departments of Electronic Engineering, Electronic Engineering and Applied Electronic Technology, Computer Science and Technology and Department of Automation attended the compulsory physics courses in 2000, but only 102 stayed after two weeks. However, in the following year 156 students applied for the course. After tying their brains in knots, students began to love the courses.

"The introduction of foreign teaching materials mostly challenges the teachers rather than the students," said Qian Xiajun, director of MBA training office under the School of Economics and Management of Tsinghua University. "To keep their posts, teachers and professors have to force themselves to improve their English, and many even study at the New Oriental School in the holiday."

On the mass introduction of foreign teaching materials, some experts expressed their worries that Chinese education theory and teaching materials need to be greatly improved.

First Collegiate Bench on Foreign Cases Set up

By Xiao Rong

The first collegiate bench dealing with foreign cases has been set up by Beijing No.2 Intermediate People's Court to meet the rapid growth of foreign civil and business cases after China's WTO entry.

The newly established bench will mainly handle foreign cases relating to loan contracts, international transportation contracts, international goods trading, disputes over letters of credit and international cooperation, according to Yang Xiaoyong, director of the bench.

"A new delivery system has been adopted to improve the efficiency of the service of judicial documents for foreign litigants," said Yang, "We have also standardized the judicial documents of foreign civil cases."

The staff of the bench is also learning relevant laws and regulations to guarantee the fulfillment of the three basic WTO principles of "market entry approval, transparency and citizen privilege," according to Yang.

Construction Officials of Chinese Embassy Dispatched

By Huo Xia

The first batch of Chinese embassy officials in charge of construction will be dispatched in the first half of this year, declared The Ministry of Construction and the Ministry of Foreign Trade and Economic Cooperation.

After China's WTO entry, construction markets around the world will be open to our country. In the WTO member states and districts, tariff barriers will be reduced. All of these will help decrease the cost of international contacted projects to our enterprises, acquire more opportunities to win bids of foreign projects, and bring along the export of more materials, facilities, machinery and power-generating equipment.

The first batch of Chinese Embassy construction officials will start work as soon as possible.

Capital Raises Price of Tap Water

By Shan Jinliang

Prices of tap water and sewage disposal in Beijing have increased from February 1 in a move widely regarded as a further step to save water.

This is the second rise in water prices following the increase on November 1 last year. According to the Municipal Bureau of Prices, this adjustment includes three items:

A water resources fee will be collected for the first time. 0.3 yuan every cubic meter will be collected from the surface water of the Tap Water Group and the ground water from the water factories. The fee standard for agricultural use is 0.02 yuan while it is 0.2 yuan for water use by township enterprises.

The tap water jumps in price. Water for household use has increased from 1.6 yuan to 2.0 yuan per cubic meter; water for business use from 2.40 yuan to 2.90 yuan per ton.

The sewage disposal fee has increased from 0.62 yuan to 0.78 yuan per cubic meter on average. The price for household sewage disposal will rise from 0.40 yuan to 0.50 yuan.

Water is in short supply in Beijing, with each resident currently only able to access on average 300 cubic meters of water, less than a third of the universally acknowledged lowest standard of water consumption. In this regard, following the suggestion by the State Council, the capital will gradually increase the price of water price to five yuan per cubic meter in around 2005, and build itself into a water-saving city.

Nokia China Exports Grow by 50%



By Xu Ying
Nokia announced Monday that its China sales and exports have grown to new record levels during 2001. As the company's second largest market in net sales terms since 1999, China in 2001 accounted for more than 10% of Nokia's total revenues.

The company took major steps during 2001 to increase its presence in China through investments, which boosted exports from China by around 50% to a record level of EUR2.5 billion. Contributing to this strong development was the inauguration in December of a newly established manufacturing facility at the Xingwang Industrial Park in Beijing. Nokia has become the largest exporter in the industry.

The Xingwang Park is expected to develop into a leading telecommunications manufacturing and export base bringing in investments of more than EUR1.4 billion in the coming months. After reaching full capacity, annual sales for the Park are expected to grow to over EUR7.14 billion, involving more than 30 international and local players and creating in excess of 15,000 jobs.

Speaking at the press conference, Urpo Karjalainen, President of Nokia China said, "During the 1990's Nokia invested heavily in China, making it an integral part of the company's global manufacturing and product development chain. Total investments in China to date amount to EUR2.3 billion and we will continue investing in China, to achieve the clear leadership position on all fronts of mobile communications."

Karjalainen said that Nokia's growth can be seen from a rise in the world handset market share from 32% to 37%. "In China we are close to being the No.1 best-seller."

Ping-Pong Stars to Promote Porsche

By Jiang Zhong

Liu Guoliang and Kong Linghui, two of the world's top Ping-Pong players, were selected to promote top-class sports car Porsche this Monday.

Liu and Kong said that Porsche was one of the best sports cars in the world, and that each speed enthusiast should have the right to enjoy the pleasure of driving Porsche.

China has been regarded as Porsche's most important market in its long-term strategy in Asia. Dr. Wendlin Wiedeking, Board Chairman at Porsche AG, Stuttgart, visited Beijing on January 27 in order to show Porsche's confidence in the Chinese market. He said that great changes had taken place in a short period and that Porsche's sales had also seen a dramatic increase since its entry into the China mainland in February 2001, which showed that China was one of the most important potential markets in the world. China's official WTO entry would undoubtedly further Porsche's presence in the Chinese market.

Porsche set up its first demonstration hall in Beijing with the aid of Jebson & Co. Ltd. It will set up two more demonstration halls in Guangzhou and Shanghai in the near future.



Liu Guoliang and Kong Linghui, who will promote Porsche products in the Chinese mainland
Photo by Jan Siefke

LISTINGS

Stock Exchanges Scramble

By Yang Xiao

Donald Cruickshank, chairman of the London Stock Exchange (LSE), appeared in Beijing to promote business in China. This time Cruickshank took his high level managers with him. It seems that they must meet the goal - take Chinese companies to list on LSE.

Harry Huang, Chief Representative of Nasdaq, once the lord to all list-loving dotcomers, is sitting in a small office in Shanghai enjoying his leisure time as a result of the Net Depression. He is confident that Nasdaq is still holding the advantage.

LSE once beaten by Nasdaq

Two years ago in May, when Beijing was holding its annual International Hi-Tech Industries Week, the organizer of the event invited both Jane Zhu, Head of Asia Pacific International Business Development of LSE, and Harry Huang to make presentations.

People favored Nasdaq at that time because China.com, one of China's Internet companies, made a successful IPO there in 1999. For Chinese dotcomers Nasdaq means the Holy Land. Although Zhu tried hard to attract Chinese companies to list in LSE by reminding them that LSE had set up a second board to compete with Nasdaq, Huang seized the advantage from the very beginning.

As a result, Huang took three main Chinese portals SINA, NetEase and SOHU to list on Nasdaq one by one several months later. However, Zhu got nothing.

Plain days for exchanges

When the Internet revolution failed or ceased, both Nasdaq and LSE experienced long term depression. In the year 2001, few



Donald Cruickshank (R) and Harry Huang have their sights fixed on Chinese companies
Photos by Huang Huaguo /Wang Zhenlong

Chinese companies listed on the Nasdaq. LSE also managed to get SinoPec in 2000.

Huang still works in a small Shanghai office with one secretary contrary to the rumors that he was senior VP in the Nasdaq headquarters. Meanwhile Zhu appeared this time with the same name card - no promotion at all.

But the controversy continues. Zhu cited Charles Zhang's SOHU as an example, "You can watch the record of SOHU at Nasdaq. SOHU together with NetEase dropped or once dropped below one dollar that

means junk shares. We should say the result is not all due to the Internet Depression. Chinese companies' securities circulate as a form of American Depositary Receipt (ADR). The price for trading is higher than directly trading. Our exchange accepts ADRs, shares and corporate bonds. It is cheaper and more convenient."

Huang has his own ideas, "Everybody knows NetEase chose ADRs, but SOHU uses shares while trading. The cost for trading and listing fees are lower than the LSE. We have the statistics.



SOHU as well as NetEase's trading by value are all higher than the 14 Chinese companies listed in New York. We take NYSE as our main competitor. The LSE is the second according to our statistics sequenced by the daily trading by value. We trade \$2 billion per day, and then NYSE, LSE and Paris."

On the other hand, Donald Cruickshank points to another chart. LSE was the biggest exchange that traded a value of 2.43 billion Euros per day, followed by NYSE, and then Nasdaq. Cruickshank claims that the Enron Scan-

dal could not break out on LSE because of the well-established supervisory and regulatory system. The listed company needs to reveal corporate information to the shareholders and the watchdog every four days.

Huang says that companies listed in Nasdaq can reveal corporate information every day. "We have no scandals too. The listed companies must announce its fiscal report every quarter. The system can prevent scandals."

For the year 2002

Cruickshank's China visit does not just promote LSE. He also made a presentation to introduce the U.K. experience from the 1980's on the shift from state-owned enterprises to private-owned companies last Friday at a senior symposium. More importantly, Cruickshank met Wu Jichuan, the Minister of Information Industry to discuss the possibility of China Telecom listing on LSE according to Reuters. Zhu predicted optimistically, "You can pay attention to us in future. We are certain this is a good season for us."

Huang keeps to his conservative ways. "Frankly we suffered from the economic depression in the US in 2001. Thus it follows that Nasdaq should recover following the recovery of the American economy."

Although LSE and Nasdaq have thus far been prevented from establishing an office in the Chinese mainland due to Chinese policy and the difficulty Chinese citizens face in trading overseas stocks, the two major world exchanges have nonetheless continuously promoted their markets to Chinese companies.

AUTO

Car Sales Fails to Ignite Sales Surge

A rise in sales in the Beijing auto market was proved to be a temporary phenomenon by the depressing statistic of last week

By Jiang Zhong

Sales of Yayuncun Auto Market last week (January 28 - February 3) amounted to only 1,281 units, 139 more than that of the week before. While at the beginning of January when the price war began, sales increased by nearly double.

Qie Xiaogang, director of the Information Department of the auto market, said that the clients had become cautious with their money again. The confusing market was confusing them. The hot price war launched by the auto manufacturers seemed to imply the possibility of further falls in car prices. Furthermore, new foreign brands' invasion into the Chinese auto market and the price fall in joint venture products seemed to indicate serious competition previously unseen in the market. Once competition breaks out, as is widely expected,

any price war will do no good in improving the pressing situation of Chinese auto manufacturers, but is set to made it even worse.

Disappointing sales also show that the price fall had not boosted auto sales as expected by the manufacturers and the dealers. Even sales figures from January, when the price war was well under way, differed little from those of December.

Qie said that price fall across the auto market had compromised the clients' confidence for consumption. Uncertain trends in the auto market forced more and more clients to hesitate in making purchase decisions. The hesitation of the clients, in turn, worsened the situation of the manufacturers and dealers. Each party involved in the Wait-and-See game was anxious to see the result that might be self-beneficial.

cial.

Where will the price fall end? Jia Xinguang, senior researcher at the China Auto Industry Development Research Institution, pointed out that the price fall was a must for the Chinese auto industry. Competition between high-quality, reasonably priced foreign cars and domestic manufacturers would surely result in the failure of the latter to keep up.

When the auto market in China reaches maturity, price wars will no longer make sense, Jia continued. Drops in price would never be used by foreign competitors as an opportunity for conquering the big auto market in China, because the production cost of foreign manufacturers is restricted to a reasonable range, which is the decisive factor for product pricing. Future competition would be largely focused on many other factors including af-



After China's entry to WTO, Benz's prices fell by nearly one million yuan at the dawn of this year
Photo by Chen Shuyi

ter-sales service, the innovation of technologies and the decrease in production costs. Domestic manufacturers should concentrate their resources on these factors.

Jia also said that the heavy tax levied on auto consumption in China was another important cause of the current situation. It is time for the government to take action now.

INTERNET

SOHU and SINA Update Fiscal Report

By Yang Xiao

Although the quarrels between SINA and SOHU about plagiarism are still going on, SOHU.com and its competitor announced their fiscal reports on Wednesday afternoon and yesterday morning in Beijing.

SOHU's 4thQ (ended December 31, 2001) got another record with revenues of \$4.1 million, up 15% quarter-to-quarter and 88% year-on-year. While SINA's revenues were \$6.8 million at the 2ndQ (fiscally ended December 31, 2001), up 12% from the previous quarter.

SINA revealed its Pro forma net loss was \$2.3 million representing a 22% decline from \$2.9 million for the previous quarter and a 54% decline from \$4.9 million for the same period of the previous year. On the other hand SOHU's pro forma net loss narrowed to \$2.5 million, a 47% im-



Charles Zhang Photo by Jin Lei

provement year-on-year and 8% sequentially, ahead of company guidance.

SOHU's \$2.5 million loss means \$0.07 per share. Meanwhile SINA's pro forma net loss

per share for the quarter was \$0.05, as compared to \$0.07 in the previous quarter and \$0.12 in the same period of the previous year.

Both SOHU and SINA have highlights during the fiscal quarter.

Monetization of SOHU's users through e-subscription (short messaging and premium services) and e-commerce fueled a 41% quarterly sequential increase in revenues from the prior quarter's \$1.1 million to \$1.6 million. Non-advertising gross margins also expanded, reaching 30% in the 4thQ compared to 28% in the previous quarter. Demonstrating SOHU's solid business development. With 39% of total revenues generated outside of advertising in the 4thQ.

In SINA part, during the quarter, SINA benefited from improved returns on its fee-based



Daniel Mao

services including paid e-mail, wireless short messaging services, classified advertisements and enterprise technology services. Revenues from e-commerce and fee-based services have increased

by 121% quarter over quarter and it has now reached 20% of the total revenues.

As of December 31, 2001, the total balance of SINA's cash, cash equivalents and short-term investments was \$96 million, representing a decrease of \$1.1 million from the previous quarter. For the quarter, the Company nearly achieved an operating cash flow balance where operating cash outflow fell from \$4.5 million in the previous quarter to only \$0.1 million in the current quarter.

As of December 31, 2001, SOHU's cash and marketable debt securities balance was \$46.2 million.

Although the two portals have continually been losing money, SOHU CEO Charles Zhang and SINA CEO Daniel Mao are confident about making profits in 2003.

Car Markets to Occupy Four Corners of Capital

By Xiao Rong

Four comprehensive car markets will replace the five original markets in Beijing, and are set to generate large profit margins.

The program for the capital's car markets was one of the focal points of Tuesday's press conference held by the Development Planning Committee of Beijing.

An International Automobile Fair of China will be rebuilt on the basis of the Beijing Second-hand Automobile Fair located

at Caihuying, south of Beijing city. With a planned area of 22.62 hectares, the new fair will mainly focus on the sales of second-hand automobiles as well as new cars.

A new automobile fair will be constructed near Qingnian Road in Chaoyang district in the eastern part of the city.

In the northern part of the city, a comprehensive car market covering a possible area of 20 hectares may be constructed. Located to the west of Jingchang Highway

and north of the urban light railway, the fair will mainly deal with sales of new cars, as well as boasting showrooms and service facilities.

Shijingshan district in the west of the city will have the Beijing International Automobile Trade Center. The construction began in August 2000.

Stricter regulations will be imposed on the current five car markets in Beijing to ensure they comply with standardized

business practice.

Automobile fair, comprehensive automobile market and monopoly car centers are the three future trends of the automobile sales network in Beijing, according to the meeting.

The annual transactions of new automobiles in Beijing have reached a total of 130,000 in the past five years, while used cars amounted to 60,000, indicating a great market potential.

Multi-nationals Favor Zhongguancun

“New Zhongguancun” will appear in June this year

By Shan Jinliang

Foreign investment has dramatically increased in Zhongguancun Science Park, after multinationals such as Olympus and VIA Technologies (Hong Kong) set up bases there last year, said the Zhongguancun Administrative Committee recently.

After the improvement of its service environment, the science park utilized foreign contractual capital of \$600 million in 2001, 22.4% up from the previous year, and actual input of \$350 million, up 52.1%.

347 high-tech companies opened in Zhongguancun in 2001; a number of them have investment from famous world giants like MISSC Mitsubishi Semi-Conductor Company invested by Mitsubishi Electronics, Siemens Dematic (China), Beijing Thomson Zhaowei Multimedia invested by French Thomson.

535 new enterprises were established since the park set up its overseas Chinese students service system in June 2000. Apart from the Silicon Valley, Tokyo and Amsterdam liaison sites, the park is determined to build up liaison sites in Canada and the American East Coast in the first half year.

The park started a “one-stop” registration service from July last year, and eliminated 21 steps for business examination and approval, said Liu Zhihua, director of the committee.

Under the support of the committee, Zhongguancun Sci-tech Guarantor Enterprise acted as a guarantor for 140 companies during its first year of operation in 2001. To attract more investment into the park, the committee set up a 70-million-yuan “Start-up Introductory Fund” and signed contracts with 13 local and overseas venture capital bodies.

To reach the goal of an annual economic growth rate of 20%, said Liu, the committee will try to solve major issues such as traffic congestion, administrative examination and approval reform.

Air China Seeks Partners for Overseas IPO

By Zhao Hongyi

Air China is seeking strategic investors to cooperate for restructuring its assets, according to sources from the company.

“We welcome investors to join us, either domestic or overseas, by any means of cooperation,” said Yao Weiteng, accountant general of Air China in an interview this week.

Reports say Air China has contacted its foreign counterparts like Lufthansa, Northwest Airlines, Singapore Airlines and Hong Kong's Cathy Airlines. Possible underwriters include Merrill Lynch, Hong Kong & Shanghai Banking Holdings and UBS.

Air China says it is aiming at higher efficiency before seeking public listing.

Air China has been seeking initial public offering (IPO) on the Hong Kong stock market for several years. But annual operational deficits have prevented it from reaching that goal.

An operational surplus of 36 million yuan in the second half of last year raised the hope of Air China's IPO dreams again. The company ran a deficit of 650 million yuan and 600 million yuan in 2000 and 2001 respectively.

According to an air transportation industry restructuring initiative, Air China will integrate with Chongqing based Southwest Airlines and China National Aviation Corp. (CNAC).

Other two airlines groups include China Eastern Airline Group consisted with Xi'an based China Northwest Airline and Kunming based Yunnan Airlines; and China Southern Airlines group consisted with Shenyang based China Northern Airlines and Urumuqi based Xinjiang Airlines.

Latest reports say the initiative had gained approval from the central government on January 23.



Air China wants to take off again this time
Photo by Fan Jiwen



Huge business opportunities lie in the oil and gas exploration in Xinjiang and urban network construction along the pipeline, indicating Ma Fucai, chairman of PetroChina (left). Standing beside is Zhang Guobao (right), vice minister of the powerful State Development Planning Commission
Photo by La Sitong

Shell Consortium Wins Huge Gas Pipeline Contract

China's gas market looks poised to offer great potential

By Zhao Hongyi

PetroChina, one of China's oil and gas giants, launched the construction of its largest ever project on Tuesday—the West-East Pipeline Project, and publicly acknowledged the agreement with Royal Dutch/Shell consortium for cooperation in the whole process.

PetroChina's West-East Pipeline Project was first initiated in the 1990s and finally endorsed by the central government on Tuesday. Together with PetroChina, the Shell consortium also gained approval to participate in the project, including gas exploration, pipeline construction, and gas retailing in the end-using cities along the line.

The two sides reached an interim agreement for cooperation by the end of last year, revealed Ma Fucai, chairman of PetroChina's board of directors. Detailed agreements are required however before each project starts.

The consortium led by Shell consists of Royal Dutch Shell, OAO Gazprom and OAO Stroytransgaz from Russia, and Hong Kong China Gas Co. Ltd.

The preliminary agreement allows the Shell consortium to take a 45% share and PetroChina the remaining 55% in the construction and operation of the 4,200-kilometer long gas line for 45 years.

Of the total 150 billion yuan (\$18 billion) investment,

46 billion yuan will go on the pipeline construction, 26 billion yuan on exploring gas fields and 70-80 billion yuan for end-users' market development, including city gas distributing networks construction and improvement.

However, it does not mean Exxon Mobile, a strong rival of Shell consortium in the bidding competition that lasted throughout 2000, will be phased out of the project competition and participation, stressed officials from PetroChina.

“Exxon Mobile can join hands with Shell in the investment,” said Huang Yan, vice chairman and president of PetroChina. “That is an issue between them. But they have to adhere to the conditions stipulated in the interim agreement reached by Shell consortium and PetroChina.”

Huge sub-contracted business opportunities lie in the oil and gas exploration in the upstream in Xinjiang, city networks construction and improvement along the pipeline.

Gas for the pipeline will come from Xinjiang's Kuqa-Tabei area in the Tarim Basin, which has a verified gas reserve of 372.5 billion cubic meters and will supply 12 billion cubic meters annually for 20 years, officials said.

In addition, hundreds of billion cubic meters of gas reserves had been detected in the same area by the end of last year, increasing the total volume to 750.4 billion cubic meters, PetroChina officials said.

Unique Business School Accepted by Authorities

By Zhao Hongyi

China Europe International Business School (CEIBS) claimed recently in Shanghai that their diplomas and certificates had won the acknowledgment of China's central government. But the Academic Degree Committee (ADC) of the State Council denied such acknowledgment, saying the school still has a long way to go in that direction.

Located in Shanghai, CEIBS is a non-profit government-to-government joint venture established in 1994 under an agreement between China's Ministry of Foreign Trade and Economic Cooperation (MOFTEC) and the European Union (EU). The school receives financial support from the Municipal Government of Shanghai and the EU.

It is the first of its kind on the Chinese mainland. In the last decade,

CEIBS carried out MBA courses imported from Europe and designed specific courses with a Chinese background.

The school accepted managers and officials from state-owned enterprises and governmental bodies, thus contributing a great and also unique role in the country's economic reform process.

“We are quite independent in enrollment standards, courses selection and teaching staff recruitment,” said professor Zhang Guohua, vice president of the school.

However, the ADC Office of the State Council, which is under the Ministry of Education (MoE) in Beijing, emphasized in a phone-line interview that ADC had only legalized the existing status of CEIBS, rather than its

academic diplomas and certificates.

CEIBS is reluctant to let its students to take part in the national annual exams and refused to arrange some traditional socialist economic courses in their programs, according to sources from ADC Office.

“Currently, CEIBS issues their MBA diploma jointly with Shanghai Jiaotong University. We have never raised any challenge to that,” Ru Xiaobing, division chief of the ADC Office told Beijing Today in a telephone interview.

“To obtain the acceptance of their diplomas from ADC, candidate schools have to submit applications, go through a number of academic researches and studies, academic seminars and many administrative procedures, all of which take quite a long time.”



Photo by Zhuang Jian

Huaxia Bank to Introduce Overseas Capital for Public Listing

By Zhao Hongyi

China's Huaxia Bank is aiming to attract overseas investment and talent to stimulate its internationalized operational standards for a possible initial public offering by the end of this year, according to sources from the year-end internal workshop in the bank held earlier this week in Beijing.

Established in 1992, Huaxia is one of China's eight national collectively owned commercial banks. The bank has over 20 investors, most of whom are state-owned enterprises like Shougang Group. Huaxia has been preparing for a public listing for the past few years.

Reports say Huaxia has been in contact with a number of world-famous banks like Hong Kong based Shanghai & Hong Kong Banking Corporation (SHBC) and New York based Citibank. But Wu Jianming, president of the bank, declined to give any further details to the media, saying that his company is trying to standardize business operations and evolve into an internationalized commercial bank in the next five years.

“We'll channel all our efforts in this direction. Before that, we'll fully adapt to internationalized accounting standards, reposition our business focus, and introduce operation and risk management mechanisms,” said Mr. Wu.

“This year we'll introduce foreign investment to our bank, recruit high level management talents and technicians from abroad to our management team,” added Wu.

Imported Liquid Gas Arrives on Beijing Market

By Zhao Hongyi

Liquid Gas from the U.S.A. and Japan will be available on the Beijing market as early as next week, sources from Beijing Liquid Petroleum Gas (LPG) Company told Beijing Today this week.

China's entry to WTO means liquid gas import tariffs will decrease from last year's 6% to 3%, creating a space for imported liquid gas to stay.

Beijing has been encouraging the use of liquid gas, especially in automobiles, for years. Currently, 60 liquid gas stations are available alongside the hundreds of petroleum stations for automobiles. The price of liquid gas is generally cheaper than that of petroleum. But liquid gas has not received the welcome it deserves.

Experts calculated the average monthly consumption



Photo by Zhuang Jian

volume of liquid gas in Beijing should be higher than 20,000 tons. But actual consumption ranges between 6,000-8,000 tons, less than half of the ideal figure.

“The problem lies in the quality,” said Mr. Yang Qing, an engineering professor and researcher from China Institute of Energy Conversion.

“Domestically processed liquid gas contains more air bubbles and impurities compared to imported gas,” said Yang.

“The monopoly of liquid gas supply by the numerable domestic giants is gone forever. Real competition has just started,” concluded Yang.

Beijing Safari Park to Donate a Lion to Afghanistan

By Sun Ming

Beijing's Badaling Wild Animal World Safari Park is to donate a lion to Afghanistan's Kabul Zoo. According to a spokesperson for the park, the donation will be realized in the near future.

Just a few days ago, one-eyed Marjan, the only lion in the Kabul Zoo, was found dead in his cage. Having survived wars, sieges, invasions and a grenade attack, he finally succumbed to the one foe he could not beat, old age. He was 30 years old.

"It's such sad news," says Wang Wei, vice-manager of Badaling Wild Animal World, who first suggested the donation. Wang says she cared about Marjan from the first time she saw him on television one month ago. "He was so lonely and decrepit then."

According to Wang, animals occupy a very important position in the minds of the people who look after them. After hearing the news, she and other staff

of the safari park got the idea of donating a lion to Afghanistan. "We hope Kabul Zoo can be reconstructed soon."

Four years ago, Badaling Wild Animal World bought 17 African lions from Japan, and it now boasts a total population of 84.

Wang said they plan to choose one from among the more than 20 lionesses who are now one and a half years old, because the young animals are better able to adapt to new environments. "Our little lion will have the possibility to bear a litter in Afghanistan next spring."

Abdul Basir Hotak, counselor of the Afghanistan Embassy said he is very happy to hear the news. He added that Afghans would appreciate China providing any animals and veterinary supplies, as many animals in the Kabul Zoo died or were wounded in the recent war.

The China Wild Animal Protection Association is reportedly also considering donating a lion to the Kabul Zoo.

Royal Ceremonies Replayed for Spring Festival

By Sun Ming

In the coming Spring Festival, traditional Qing Dynasty ceremonies of worshipping heaven and ancestors will be recreated in Beijing. It will be the first time that the two ceremonies have been seen in China since 1949.

The heaven worshipping ceremony will be held at the Temple of Heaven on Chinese New Year's first day. According to the park administration, two hundred people wearing traditional

garments will make up the honor guard. Visitor will be able to hear traditional music that dates back to the Zhou Dynasty (1066-256BC).

The ancestor worshipping ceremony will be held at the Ancestral Temple, at the Forbidden City. Other ancient ceremonies, such as Ascending the Throne, the Emperor's Wedding, Acting as Regent and Triumphant Return will also be reenacted, from February 12 to February 18.

Fire Jugglers Leave Town for Festival

By Su Wei / Sun Ming

For the first time in many years, Beijingers will not have the opportunity to see an exhibition of 'fire baton juggling' at temple fairs this Spring Festival.

The Wulan family, the only group in Beijing that still practices this traditional acrobatic skill, has been invited to Jiangxi Province for the coming Spring Festival.

Before they left town, Beijing Today interviewed Wulan Deru, the most skilled performer of the family, who can juggle with a fire baton continuously for several hours.

The fire baton is a long steel fork, burning at both ends. The performer waves it in the air, throws it and

catches it and rolls it around his or her body, in a spectacular display.

The 54-year-old Deru says her father, Wu Xushan is the initiator of the fire baton performance. "He used to perform the art so well that as soon as he came onto the stage, there was enthusiastic applause."

But the father was reluctant to ask his four children to follow in his footsteps, as people once looked down at acrobats.

"Impressed by my determination to learning the skill, my father agreed to teach me at last when I was five years old."

She says that not anyone can become adept at fire baton juggling, not even her broth-

ers can do it as well as she can. Her family believes that she is a born fire baton juggler, as it only took her one summer of practicing before she gave a public performance.

Deru comes to Beijing Binyue Park to practice from 6 a.m. to 9 a.m. almost every morning. "But it only takes five or six minutes on stage to complete the whole routine, about 20 or 30 actions," she says.

The Wulan family are looking for an "apprentice" who is not only interested in learning to juggle the fire baton, but is willing to suffer to do so! "It is really very painful to learn, not only the hands, but the whole body will be covered in blisters!"

What did Yuanyuan receive, service or fraud?

By Chen Ying

The case, a Chinese student verses an overseas-study agency, began the first court debate on the morning of February 1.

After only staying in England for 77 days, Yuanyuan, an 18-year-old high-school graduate, came back to Beijing on December 4 last year, unable to bear the miserable living conditions in his boarding house.

He sued Jiuchuan Consulting Services who arranged his study in London, demanding the defendant compensate for ten items of loss, including the service charge, tuition fee, study material costs and psychological hurt. The People's Court of Dongcheng District accepted the case.

Yuanyuan got the information about study in EF Education Language School of America from Jiuchuan last February. He signed the contract with Jiuchuan and paid eight thousand yuan as commission. But Jiuchuan made a mistake in the recommendation to the American Embassy in China, writing UK instead of USA, and Yuan's applica-

tion to the American Embassy was refused.

After negotiating with Jiuchuan, Yuan decided to attend EF's college preparatory course in England.

He remitted US\$11,900 dollars for tuition fee and \$640 dollars for insurance to the school in August. As Yuanyuan said, Jiuchuan told him that the fees covered courses and accommodation, and there would be no overhead expenses. Jiuchuan also reassured him that he would live with a middle-class family in England, and wouldn't encounter any accommodation problems.

On his arrival in London Yuanyuan found there was no preparatory course for college education at the EF School. Moreover, he was settled in a house with an elderly widow who depended on social welfare. After paying a large amount of money for boarding, he didn't even have enough to eat.

Unable to bear his miserable life in England, Yuanyuan discontinued his schooling abroad and came back to Beijing at the end of last year.



Teletubbies Come to China

By Sun Ming

Teletubbies, made for the BBC (British Broadcasting Cooperation) by acclaimed children's program producer Ragdoll, is to be broadcast by China Central Television (CCTV).

All 365 episodes of Teletubbies will be dubbed into Mandarin and will start screening after Chinese New Year, broadcasting daily from February 11.

According to the producer, Teletubbies was created for children up to the age of four, and reflects the belief that children's confidence and self-esteem develop through fun and laughter.

Up to now, the television series has been translated into 45 different languages.

Rupert Gavin of BBC Worldwide said, "BBC Worldwide and CCTV have forged a strong relationship over more than twenty years and this new agreement reflects the excellent cooperation we enjoy in China."

Director of CCTV's Youth & Children Center, Yu Peixia added, "We don't doubt that the program will be as popular in China as it has been the world over."

Feeding the birds

By Sun Ming

More than 400 white swans are frequently seen these days frolicking and picking up food on the frozen surface of Miyun Reservoir.

What could they find to eat on the icy surface? "Corn kernels!" answers Liu Jianjun, vice-director of Miyun Television & Broadcasting Bureau.

According to Liu, his bureau has been scattering corn kernels on the ice every two days at their own expense over the past month. "We hope the white swans hibernating here needn't worry about finding food," he said.

In recent years, Miyun Reservoir, the biggest reservoir in Beijing, has become a hibernation habitat for migratory birds. Birds from Siberia, Heilongjiang Province and other northern regions have taken to wintering here.

"The warmer climate in winter is the main reason," says Zhang Zhengwan, a biologist of Beijing Normal University. Some migratory birds don't fly as far south as they once did. However the lake surfaces in Beijing still ice up, which makes finding food difficult for those migratory birds, especially the white swans. "So we got the idea," said Liu.

Up to now, the bureau has scattered some 3,000 kilograms of corn kernels, the swan's favorite food. Liu says he and his colleagues often have the opportunity to interact with these lovely birds because their bureau is located near the reservoir.

Cheating Romeo Brought to Justice

By Ivy Zhang

An unemployed man with a record of fraud convictions has been arrested on charges of cheating over 350,000 yuan from over 20 women he dated over the past four years.

Li Yong, 44 years old, started two companies since being released from jail in 1989, but had to close them in 1997 due to poor management.

One day in 1997, Li came up with an idea to get money. Pretending to be a wealthy businessman, he renting an Audi car, at a monthly cost of 5,000 yuan, signed up with five matchmaking agencies, describing himself as a successful manager of a company with overseas experiences, a "Green Card", an Audi car and his own house. The companions he was seeking were women who had divorced. He reasoned that divorcees would be sympathetic and inclined to cherish their second chance of being loved.

Not long after, he was introduced to a woman identified as Ms. Zhang and a romance soon developed. While maintaining a relationship with Zhang, Li began to borrow money from her under the pretext that he was investing it in a big engineering project in Tianjin. During their 3-year relationship, Li took over 150,000 yuan from the woman. Zhang knew nothing about where the money really went, and even paid Li's phone bill every month.

From 1997 to 2002, Li "fell in love" with more than 20 divorced women, most of whom were well educated and financially independent. He sought free accommodation at their houses, sleeping with them and borrowing money.

On December 20 last year, one of the women found a notebook in his car containing many contact numbers. She called the numbers one by one and discovered the truth. A group of furious women gathered in Beijing late last month and told their story to the police.

When asked whether he had really loved any of the women or seriously considered marriage, Li said, "I never love anyone. I was just playing a game, fooling their emotions and getting money to make a living. I've never thought of marriage."



Photo by Yan Tong

Writing Spring Festival Couplets for Fun

By Su Wei

With the arrival of the Spring Festival, many foreigners are trying their hand at writing "Qunlian", or Spring Festival couplets.

Last Saturday, more than 30 foreigners from over twenty countries, including Canada, America, England, Bulgaria, Australia, New Zealand and Israel took part in an activity organized by the Chinese Culture Club in Dazhalaan Painting Market, "Foreigners Learning to Write Chinese

Couplets".

Spring Festival couplets, once known as "peach-wood charms", are usually pasted on either side of people's front doors before Chinese New Year's Eve, traditionally as a means of warding off evil in the coming year.

Zoe Allesbrook from England and her boyfriend Alex Woods have been studying calligraphy for the last ten weeks. Zoe happily told Beijing Today, "I can stick my own couplets on the door of my house!"

Get Shorty!

City theater bars 6-year-old girl

By Chen Ying

But for one centimeter, she could have gone to the dance. Instead Zhou Yuanyuan held her mother Liang Ling's hand as Poly Theatre door staff refused entrance. Her offense?

Yuanyuan, is 1.19 meters tall. If she had been 1.20 meters, then Yuanyuan, 6, could have attended the China Oriental Song & Dance Ensemble performance in Beijing on Sunday, January 13. Instead Yuanyuan and her mom went home.

On Friday, January 18, Liang Ling filed suit against Poly Theatre for infringing her daughter's right to receive a comprehensive quality education. She requested a public apology, the arrangement of a similar standard of performance and 1,000 yuan in mental suffering compensation for Yuanyuan.

The People's Court of Dongcheng District has accepted the case. Similar regulations apply to other city theaters, but this is the first time in China that these rules have sparked legal action.

The flipside is that patrons of the arts often complain about noisy city audiences. But do they mean Yuanyuan? Opinions follow:

Yuanyuan, ballet student

I had a ticket and I am mature enough to follow the theater's code of behavior. Why won't they let me in?

Liang Ling, mother of Yuanyuan

We went to watch the show because of my daughter. She has studied ballet for three years and

wanted to improve her feel for the art by attending a quality performance. But the theater refused her. I think the theater's rule is unreasonable. Whether a child can be self-governing has no relationship with the child's height. My daughter is a pupil. She can take care of herself.

Moreover, I think the rule really hurts children. So I wanted to adopt legal means to ensure a judgment is made about the rights and wrongs of this case. Now with the sudden media interest, I feel this isn't all just about me and my daughter. I feel other families may have suffered similar experiences.

It's inevitable some children will prove disruptive during concerts or performances. The theater can adopt regulations only when these do not contradict national law.

Spokesman, Poly Theatre

The board of directors made the rule after discussions. And the rule has been in practice a long while. Poly Theatre is a venue for classical art such as opera and ballet. The theater often receives spectator complaints about children making noise and trouble during performances. This really destroys the atmosphere.

Every company has its own rules. For instance, there is the censorship classification system for movies. Children are forbidden to enter the cinema if the movie is deemed unsuitable.

We can understand parents want to let their children experience an artistic atmosphere. But we have to make such a decision to protect the bulk of the audi-

ence. The theater will hold a special performance for children if it is suited to them.

Lin Lin, amateur classical music enthusiast

I think the rule is reasonable in a sense. Kids are kids. Most are liable to be naughty and it's impossible for them to stay stuck on their seat for more than an hour.

It's really embarrassing when a baby cries in the theater. You can't blame the parents because they didn't make the trouble. And you also can't blame the kids because they usually don't know what they are doing. But the fact remains someone should be held responsible for this discomfort.

As I see it, there are special classical music performances for children in western countries. Famous symphony orchestras often hold small-scale outdoor concerts for kids. Some virtuosos even perform in kindergartens. So children can obtain contact with classical music when very young.

But the situation is totally different in China. Although the parents are eager to let their children gain more opportunities to experience classical music, special slots for children are rarer. So I think the most important thing is to open up some places where children can appreciate the elegant art comfortably.

Jiang Ling, Beijing Juvenile Person's Protection Committee Office

Children have the right to accept education at any moment. That right shouldn't be forbidden. According to the 22nd item of the Juvenile Protection Law, museums, theaters and cinemas should



Rule no. 3 : children under 1.2 meters can't attend

Photo by Cui Hao

open to pupils and high school students at preferential prices.

In the basics of the law, the 36th item of the Beijing Juvenile Protection Statute rules that protected people include children younger than school age, pupils and high school students. So the Poly Theatre regulation should be considered invalid.

Paul Wusteman, secretary, British Embassy

I think parents would know it was impolite to take a baby to a concert. But young children go to concerts in the UK. I never heard of such a rule in my country. I think it's unnecessary.

In my experience, when I first

came to China, I found that the audience is noisier generally. It may be the Chinese tradition. Because in the western tradition, going to a concert is almost like going to religious service. It's a very formal activity. With Chinese traditional events, for instance, Peking Opera has a long performance. People come and go. They eat and applaud. The theater acts like a social location.

It's different customs. I prefer the Chinese way myself, but certainly prefer not too much noise. It's entertainment after all, not the most important thing in the world. I think the Chinese way is healthier.

SOUND BITES

"It's not possible to figure out what caused this huge Enron ship to capsize if you can't hear from the captain."

— Senator Ron Wyden of Oregon Democrat for the Senate commerce committee summoning Kenneth Lay, Former Enron chairman, to appear before Congress

"The government is trying to force the population to accept the peso when it is obvious that the population prefers dollars. So we can expect strong pressure on the peso."

— Omar J Borla, a senior economist with Santander Investment in New York, as Argentine banks were banned from selling dollars as a first step towards fully converting the economy back to the peso

"Don't harm an innocent man because you're just going to create one more misery. Using Daniel as a symbol and all of this is completely wrong, completely wrong. If anyone's going to give his life and save him, it's me. Please make contact with me — I'm ready."

— Marianne Pearl, wife of kidnapped US journalist Daniel Pearl, in Karachi, Pakistan, in an interview with the BBC

"As an administration, Japanese Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi's administration may last a while longer, but the reforms are over. Makiko Tanaka (dismissed foreign minister) was one of the engines of his high public support, but you can't fly on only one engine."

— Shigenori Okazaki, political analyst with UBS Warburg

By Chen Ying

北京青年报

BEIJING TODAY

今日北京

房地产版(英文版)

让我们和太阳一起升起

《北京青年报·房地产版(英文版)》是《北京青年报》每周五推出的房地产及相关的广告专版,其英文版随报发行媒体优势不言而喻。根据房产客户的需求,让公司决策层直接阅读到相关内容,更具针对性,力事促客户的广告效力发挥至最大!

Real Estate Edition in English of Beijing Youth Daily, which is pressed every Friday, is a new advertising special one for the real estate and relative industries. The English Edition is delivered with the newspaper so the media advantage is very obvious. Real Estate Edition in English of Beijing Youth Daily, aiming at the advertiser's requests for the more pertinence, let the policy-makers read the relative content directly and try to reach the most advertisement effectiveness

HOT TEL:13910419797 84014823

Dart Foreign Affairs Management Office

*Yard architecture with European style

*sufficient parking space, convenient traffic, complete facilities and offering service around the day

**Dart Commerce Office

1. it is located between CBD center and Guomao

2. favourable price: RMB3-4 yuan/squaremeter/day

3. telephone number: 65032597 or 64951817

**Dart Commerce Garden

1. it is located in the New Olympic sphere and it is between foreign account office and the Chinese-Japanese Hospital

2. favourable price: RMB 2.8-3.5 yuan/squaremeter/day

3. telephone number: 65032097 or 65032598

My company also has open separate foreign office building with 15000 square meter to be sold (including property right). It is located in north-eastern corner of Siyuan Bridge.

WARWICK INTERNATIONAL APARTMENTS

Were we do our job... So you can do yours.

Special recommended villa at Lido are

\$6000/29spm/3br/fully furnished

TEL:(010)67151166 ext.3005/3006

赛特饭店 SCITECH HOTEL

BUSINESS FLOOR ON LINE

Business Floor Standard Room: USD98+15%SC

Business Floor Suite: USD138+15%SC

Business Floor Duplex Suite: USD300+15%SC

Express check in & check out Free use 3DDs Internet Lines

One free buffet in Coffee Shop per day Daily newspaper & Magazine Free use swimming pool, GYM and sauna Free income faxes

Daily happy hours: (17:30-18:30) Welcome amenities on arrival

One piece free pressing per day

ADD: No. 22 Jianguomenwai Avenue, Beijing 10004 P.R. China

Tel: 8610-65123388

Fax: 8610-65123542

E-mail: sthotel@w.com.cn

City Plaza (Phase) And Palace International

Address: 3A, Shi Lipu, Chaoyang District, Beijing, China

Transportation: conveniently close to Chaoyang Road, Jingtong Express Way, and Ciyunsi Bridge of the 4th Ring Road

Services: Receptionist (Lobby), Tickets, Room Service, Home Maid, Room Cleaning, Home Appliance Repairs, and Flowers.

Rental Returns: USD900.00-2200 per month

Current Occupation Rate: Offices: 100%; Department 95.7%

Business Tax: 0.4%

Management Fees: Palace International: RMB800 per square meter per month for Cleaning, Security (in-door and out-door) Vegetation, Elevators, Elevators, Minor Repairs, Room.

HOT TEL: 65561798

You Couldn't Address yourself Better in Beijing

Clients may also enjoy the following benefits:

#24-hour room service

#Underground Parking

#Business Centre

#15% discount at best on food & beverage, shopping and recreational area

Call use now to arrange for a site inspection to find out more.

Mr. Ashley Wong, Property Manager at
Tel: (86-10) 65973388 ext. 1400
Fax: (86-10) 65978182

保罗大厦

◇To South of Lan Dao building, it's new building

◇Area: 3500m2-4000m2, 430spm/per floor

◇This building is available to Bank, Negotiable Securities, Business Center, restaurant etc.

◇24 hours security & hot water

Tel: 65958081 65958060

Mobil: 13701350511 13910890956

Add: No. 38 Chao Wai Avenue Chao Yang district Beijing

Sunflower Tower 盛福大厦

Investors: Philipp Holzmann Anlagen GmbH

Location: No. 37, Maizidian Street, Chaoyang District, Beijing Next to the Liang Ma Hotel. Located at the East 3rd Ring Road

Area: 817 square meters (based on architectural area) on 24th Floor

Asking rent: USD28/month/sqm (gross including management)

Communication: Supplied nodes IDD lines and 4MB of Capacity

ISDN is available

Elevator: 10 KONE elevators HVAC System: Four-pipe system

Amenities: Business center, Exhibition facilities, Retail space

Existing Tenants: Walt Disney, BASY, KONE, E-turtle Next work

Tel: 85275696-608

中国人寿大厦 CHINA LIFE TOWER

租售热线: Enquiry hotline: 65886868

Developer: Beijing Zhong Baixin Real Estate development Ltd

Designer: RTKL Company

北京市国宾大厦 BEIJING AMBASSADOR MANSION

Ambassador Mansion Good News!

Newly decorated apartments and offices Apartment styles Available!

Range from 1 bedroom to 4 bedroom USD1000/month up

Office Styles

Nex area from 20m2-1600m2

Ambassador Mansion is an excellent choice for your business or life

For more information Call us at 010-64384093 or fax on 010-64380148

寻求合作

本公司欲求东二环东三环附近写字楼式办公楼进行合作。要求: 手续合法, 价格合理, 中介免谈, 真心合作者请来电 64055786

this newspaper's perennial legal adviser: Beijing jingtai law office undertaking mostly:

1. real estate business that buy, rent and manage kinds of licences in Beijing;

2. foreign cases, maritime, finance, bond, important and difficult affairs;

3. debt, economy contract, foreign marriage cases, criminal defense;

4. notarizations;

5. holding perennial legal advisers for foreign enterprises, providing legal assistance;

6. providing law, regulations and contract versions in any languages.

TEL: 86-10-83511218 FAX: 86-10-83525557

http://www.venus-law.com e-mail: jt@venus-law.com

龙潭涉外公寓 LONGTAN APARTMENTS

from \$500/month. 34-110 sq.m (studio, 1-2 bedrooms)

Fully furnished with satellite TV, IDD appliances.

24-hour hot water, security, plentiful parking

near the Temple of Heaven, Chongwen District

call now for more details.

67115358 67128749

Prices Employment Medical Care Reform Hot Issues

What social issues weigh most heavily on the minds of city dwellers in China?

China Mainland Market Research (CMMR) has released an annual survey in which 13,000 city dwellers were asked to identify the issues that concerned them the most during the past year.

By Su Wei

Prices become the hottest issue again

Nearly 30% of the surveyed say prices of goods are an increasingly frequent topic of conversation with friends and relatives.

In fact prices have jumped to rank first again on the list of issues of greatest concern, after having ranked third since 1997.

It may be a result of the distribution system reform, which has been sped up during the past two or three years.

Nowadays, people's income is more closely linked with their job performance, and job title is only a minor factor in determining their salary. More consideration has been given to work load and work efficiency per day or per hour.

Meanwhile, enterprises' economic considerations are an important factor in people's concern about prices.

Although inflation is not as big a concern as it was a few years ago, people recognize that their purchasing power would be reduced if their enterprises ran into difficulty.

Zhang Li, a former employee of a state-owned enterprise says her enterprise went into liquidation, so they have not enough money compared with the others with fixed stable income. "To be frank the prices are not so high. But the problem is I have no money!"

The survey also discloses that besides retail prices, people frequently discuss the cost of medical treatment, education and housing, and children-raising allowances.

Such concerns have become more apparent since the government barred employers from providing certain services to employees that once served as supplements to the salary. In this sense, income has been reduced and expenses increased.

Taking housing allocation as an example; as of last year, employers no longer allocate housing to employees.

Those who do not already own their own homes and do not wish to rent, have to buy an apartment, either by cash or by loan. Even those forced to relocate because their old houses are being demolished, must spend tens of thousands of yuan to buy a home with a better location.

Meanwhile nearly 52% of those surveyed mainly concern about prices, are the retired, housewives and ordinary workers.

The reason may be that those people usually have a comparatively low salary. They may have more first hand experiences in dealing with problems related to insufficient money, especially when prices increase.

Among those mainly concerned with prices, 10-20% are those with a high level of disposable income, who tend to buy some high-value imported prod-



ucts such as cars.

However, with a weak world economy, prices for imported products are often unpredictable. So those people are more willing to wait before making big spending decisions.

Taking cars as an example, domestic car prices have fallen sharply, in some cases by tens of thousands of yuan, since China's entry to the WTO.

People may have anticipated the prices of imported cars would fall also, in order to be competitive with local producers.

Therefore, instead of buying cars immediately, people are holding money and speculating what the trend will be for the imported and domestic cars.

Employment a concern for many

Nearly 24% of the surveyed ranked employment as their most pressing concern for 2001. 55% of these are ordinary staff, unemployed, freelance workers and students, with a preponderance of those aged between 20 and 34 (38%), followed by the 35 to 49 age group (37%).

It suggests that employment is not only a concern for the middle-aged, but also for young people. Most people have sensed the difficulty in finding and maintaining jobs, especially the main labor force.

The direct reason may be that the government has engaged in increasing administrative efficiency measures and reduced redundancy.

Another reason may be that those who have not been laid off are still concerned about their future, especially when relatives or friends have been laid off.

As a Chinese saying goes, "He who gives no thought to difficulties in the future is sure to be beset by worries much closer at hand." Hence, there is a tendency to talk and consider their future in view of the situation of others.

For young people, it was once regarded that it would never be a real problem for them to have a job. But in fact, even those with university diplomas realize that the only way for them to find a job, or rather a satisfactory job, is to continue their studies.

Besides, the increase in university enrollments has also resulted in an increase in the number of graduates.

However the number of job vacancies has not increased accordingly.

Meanwhile, people with an overseas education background have been encouraged to return, so those who have never been overseas tend to think their advantages are disappearing.

Furthermore, with the economic development and the entry to WTO, some small enterprises are more likely to disappear. Therefore those employees are more likely facing laid-off.

For those having been laid-off, it is difficult to find jobs again unless they were experts in some areas. They have found that age has really hindered them when it comes to finding a new job, for many enterprises want young employees.

Furthermore, social welfare for the laid-off has not been fully established, though 400 or 500 yuan per month for maintaining life necessities has been guaranteed.

Even though there is a variety of free reemployment training, there are still many people underemployed.

Those re-employed are ones with some skills, such as accounting or electrical appliance repairing or they may do some physical labor services. But physical laborers are not in as high demand as technicians.

Zhang Guizhen, a laid-off of former cake maker of Beijing Shipin Factory is unable to find a job. "I can not take the advanced training to have some skills, for I only have elementary education. Even shop assistants are required to have high school education and are preferred to have the capability of speaking English."

Medical treatment reform a new focus

The survey shows nearly 22% people more frequently talk about medical treatment reform in their daily life, ranking third as a concern for 2001.

More than 68% of those are retired people, ordinary staff, and administrative staffs in insti-

tutes, specialists and technicians as well as the civil servants.

Over 25% of the retired and civil servants say they are deeply concerned about this issue.

The reason may be that before the medical treatment reform, with the except of those in non-government enterprises, people seldom cared about how much they spent on medicine and medical treatment, as the government would cover nearly 80 or 90% of these costs. For those in non-government enterprises, only when the enterprises ran well could they expect to be reimbursed for their medical expenses.

Now conditions are totally different. Enterprises and individuals as well as insurance companies have been regulated to share the cost of individual's medical treatment expenses.

Therefore, whether the enterprises makes a profit or not, they have to pay 9% of the individual expenses if the stated limitation (around 6% of the total salary) for the expenses is not broken.

If the annual medical expenses surpass the limit, the enterprises are also required to pay a small percentage of the additional amount, while the rest is to be born by the individual.

With medical treatment reform, medical treatment will be available to more people. More people will be relieved from the burden of medical expenses.

However, the reform may also cost more for those old people or those who suffer from some severe chronic diseases.

Especially those retired people, who have a monthly pension of 600 to 700 yuan. But they also are more likely to frequently visit doctors. So they consider that under the reform, they

would probably spend more on medicare.

The reason for the civil servants' concern over this issue is almost the same.

When the reform for civil servants is carried out in May this year, many expect costs to increase if they have some large operations.

Jia Bin, a civil servant of a governmental office, has had a heart operation. Of the total cost of more than 80,000 yuan, he himself only paid around 30,000 yuan. He considers himself lucky to have had the operation now. If he had had it in the second half of this year, he would probably have to pay nearly 50,000 yuan.

But after the medical treatment reform, people have a wider choice of which hospital they receive treatment in, ranging from the large municipal or provincial level hospitals to the community ones.

More concerns with society's lasting development

The survey has found that the most frequently mentioned issues for city dwellers are not only the fundamental life concerns such as prices, employment and life after retirement.

More people have become concerned with issues such as corruption and environmental protection.

The wide variety of issues concerning people suggests that they are aware that major social issues also relate closely to their lives.

People have realized the significance of the relationship between individuals and society, as well as that between human beings in general and a continually developing society.

By Su Wei

Weekly Survey

City Dwellers Prefer Foreign Mobile Phones

Among 46% of city dwellers who own mobile phones, over 40% say they will definitely prefer a foreign brand.

Sources from China Mainland Market Research have disclosed that among the current mobile phones users, nearly 18% use Motorola mobile phones, followed by nearly 12% for both Nokia and Ericson.

Meanwhile, among the 20% surveyed who will buy mobile phones in 2002, 5% each will choose Nokia and Motorola, followed by Samsung, Ericson and Siemens, each with potential purchasers over 1%.

The reason may be that people consider the foreign brands to be more reliable and of higher quality.

Although the domestic producers have concentrated on improving their after-sale services, domestic consumers are still not willing to buy products they believe will require frequent repairs.

Another reason is that consumers prefer mobile phones with multi-functions, including short message capability, Internet surfing, and note taking.

Besides, the foreign ones are usually beautifully designed and frequently updated. So they may have attracted a large number of domestic consumers.

Young, Well Educated People — Foreign Insurance Consumers

Nearly 18% more people aged between 20 and 34 plan to take out insurance cover with foreign firms, than those aged between 35 and 49.

China Mainland Market Research has found that 25% of the surveyed with university education background are more willing to take out cover with a foreign insurance firm, followed by 13% for people with middle school education and 9% for those with elementary education.

Tertiary educated people are more likely to accept new ideas.

They probably already have a basic knowledge about foreign insurance.

They may know the foreign companies usually offer a higher return and higher quality services, not only in terms of taking out insurance, but also in the area of after sales services.

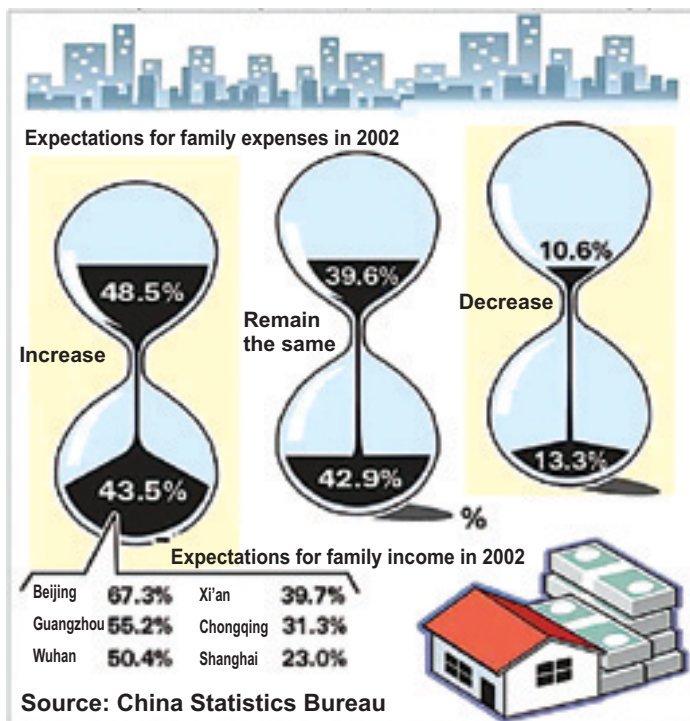
Meanwhile, shareholders and heads of enterprises are the most likely to intend to take out insurance with foreign companies among all the occupations, (about 35%), followed by enterprises administrative staff and managers as well as heads of factories, ranging from 29% to 26%.

Those surveyed who will take out insurance with a foreign company say they still want coverage for medical and life insurance, each at nearly 30%.

These kinds of insurance are widely recognized and seen to be more relevant to peoples needs.

Snapshots

City dwellers expect income increase in 2002.





Number One building comes to an untimely end

200 Million Yuan Development Goes Up in Smoke

Residential Complex on Yangtze Floodplain Declared Illegal

By Xinhua / Ivy Zhang

With a thunderous roar, building one of the new residential complex Riverside Gardens collapsed in a controlled demolition late last month. Built on the floodplain of the Yangtze River in the Hanyang district of Wuhan, Hubei province, the entire complex, covering an area of 700,000 square meters, is to be completely demolished before April 15.

Looking out the window at the spectacular view of the Yangtze River, it is difficult to believe that the Riverside Garden, completed just four years ago, is illegal.

A look at big events

Prior to 1994, this riverside area in Wuhan's northwest was virtually untouched and remained a pristine natural scene. Then in 1994, the Wuhan municipal government called for development around the two rivers, the Yangtze and its tributary, the Han River, as well as the construction of two new bridges.

The local government actively promoted the riverside area as a key area for investment. Xiao Xinfu, head of Wuhan Hongya Investment, came up with a plan to build a residential project on what was then a wasteland area on the north side of the Yangtze, actually between the river and the levee bank.

Not long after, the Hanyang Flood Control Office, Hanyang local government and Wuhan Planning Commission all approved the proposal.

In August 1995, the Hubei Provincial Government convened a special meeting that proposed taking the "Yangtze River City Garden" (later renamed Riverside Garden) as a start-up project in the development of the "Two Bridges", labeling it a model project.

In April 1996, Wuhan planning bureau and Wuhan Flood Control Office approved the "Yangtze River City Garden" project. In consideration of flood control factors, Hongya company was given instructions about the project implementation.

In 1997, the first phase of Riverside Garden project kicked off and was completed in 1998, in the wake of the flood. All of the 145 apartments were sold.

Zhang Lijun, one of the major project designers says, "The project was always controversial within the company. We had serious doubts, as the villas are built right on the edge of the river. We didn't even dare to ad-

vertise. However, the big flood in 1998 seems to have worked as an effective advertisement for our project." About one year later, the second phase of the project began.

In January 2000, Wuhan Flood Control Office approved the project's second phase implementation. In June of that year, Hubei Water Conservancy Department also gave their approval in principle, requiring the developer to take responsibility for flood control measures.

By the end of 2001, the second phase project was complete, comprising of five separate buildings with more than 300 apartments. 90% of those apartments have already been sold.

At this time, the developer launched a new marketing strategy, spending more than 8 million yuan in publicity. In a short time, the slogans "We give you the Yangtze River", "Home on the riverside" and "Choose the waterside to live by" were widely seen in Wuhan, and many government leaders sang high praises for the garden.

Model project is illegal

Things changed abruptly in December last year when the State Flood and Drought Control Office issued a notification ruling that the construction of Riverside Garden was illegal and contravened state flood control regulations. As a result, the whole project is to be demolished before the coming spring flood season begins on April 15.

Regarding liability of the project, some legal specialists argue that the situation developed as a result of illegal approval given by relevant administrations. The liability should be born by neither the residents, nor the developer, unless the developer got the approval through illegal means. The approval of the project is illegal for the following reasons:

- The approval is in violation of related laws and regulations. No houses shall be built in the floodplain or on the river bank.

- The local administration has no right to give approval. Approval for the Riverside Garden project, with a value of over 100 million yuan, can be given only by the Yangtze River Water Conservancy Committee.

- The project's second phase was implemented in 2000 and most permits were obtained in the same year. At that time, the Flood Control Law of the People's Republic of China, which clearly restricts any developments that might block the release of floodwaters, had been in effect for two years.



Responses

Zhang Lijun, the designer of the project, says the level of a city's overall planning depends on the quality of the city's management personnel. In the beginning, even the developer had doubts about whether apartment buildings should be constructed in this area.

"The main concern in the project planning was flood-control. As the developer, we have no right to judge a city's overall planning strategy. If we have the support of the government and the project is profitable, why can't we go ahead with it?"

Wang Zhancheng, a hero in battling Yangtze River floods in both 1954 and 1998, says, "It's a pity to see such a beautiful apartment building demolished and 200 million yuan lost. But in the long run, flood control should be our top priority. What shall we do in flood time if our houses are built inside the levee bank? Much greater loss could be incurred."

Professor Lin Lihong points out that the government and administrative departments must take responsibility for their actions. After China's entry into the WTO, enhancing transparency and



One of the luxury residential complexes slated for demolition Photos by Cheng Min

law practices has become even more important.

Professor Chen Jinrong says the demolition of Riverside Garden is to safe-

guard the state laws and regulations. The Flood Control Law is aimed at protecting millions of people's lives and property, and it must be upheld.



Witness the tide of history as common people's Spring Festivals change over the years.

Page 11

Spring Festival Special

Narcissus brings warmth and hope to the home
Jiaozi draws Chinese back to family in the past 1700 years
Touch the Stone Monkey of Baiyunguan
Valentine's Day suggestions for lovers

Page 16
Page 17
Page 19
Page 23

Greetings from Us to You

Greetings Beyond the Ocean

By Xiaoxia

An E-mail aroused feelings of great joy in the editorial department. It was the response of Spring Festival greeting from George E. Killian, Executive Director of National Junior College Athletic Association (NJCAA).

In the Beijing Universiade of last year, *Beijing Today* honorably launched the Village News under the support of George Killian and gained fame among the coaches and athletes. George Killian paid a visit to our editorial office during the Universiade.

In his E-mail, George Killian expressed his pleasure to learn that the newspaper is progressing well. He also said, "When I was in Beijing, I told everyone that this was a great step forward for the youth of China."

George Killian also wants to tell his driver, Wang Qinghai that his family sent their best wishes to Wang and Wang's family for a Happy and Prosperous New Year through our newspaper and hopes to gain Wang's mail address. Wang and George Killian developed a sincere friendship in Beijing.

"We Met Underground!"

By Sun Ming

"I found *Beijing Today* at a subway newsstand six months ago," said Jade Gray, who took the newspaper all the way to an open-air meeting on Sunday, "And from then on, I always buy it."

Jade Gray, who came to Beijing from New Zealand last year, is now manager of the Fusion Vitality Center located in Haidian District. Opened last month, the center offers foreign students a chance to make friends, catch up on news from home, as well as work out.

"Thanks for your Spring Festival greetings," says Jade when he accepted the seasons greeting, "I really love your newspaper."

Jade said he regularly finds interesting articles in this local newspaper. As an expat in Beijing, he cares more about current affairs in the city. "*Beijing Today* can meet my needs in this aspect," he said.

Jade also made some suggestions. "Your newspaper could be a little younger," he said. He thinks that some articles in the cultural and entertainment pages are more suited to the taste of older foreigners. "As young foreigners living in Beijing, we want to gain more information about bars, pop music or modern shopping centers in the city," he said, "Not always classical music and antiques, for we are not visitors."

Jade further recommends the newspaper add a page especially for foreign students in Beijing. "The number is quite large," he said, "And foreign students definitely need something to help them relax."

Close-up On a New Reader

By Ivy Zhang

After reading a few copies of *Beijing Today* in the morning, Patrick A. Lin accepted the interview in the afternoon and subscribed one copy as soon as the interview was wrapped up.

"I thought it was a pretty good paper," Patrick says, "It's very informative. It has good entertainment, political, and econom-



Michael Primont



Yann Thefaine



Jade Gray



Claes Barnsten



Patrick A. Lin



Ardak Assylbekova

China's most important celebration, Spring Festival, is upon us in four days. Here we would like to express our sincere festival greetings to all our readers: Xin Nian Kuai Le!

***Beijing Today* has been progressing since her launch on May 11, last year, under your care and support. We feel great pride that this young newspaper run by us young people might bring happiness to you. We also hope *Beijing Today* may accompany you through a happy, new 2002.**

(Editor)



George E. Killian

ic articles. A good combination of news." Patrick is our new reader. He's from Cincinnati, Ohio of the United States and works as the Director of Membership at the American Chamber of Commerce.

Patrick suggests it would be best to have more local business news in *Beijing Today* as lots of business people in Beijing find Chinese and Beijing business news from other sources. "I found the news about Sanlitun in the last issue very interesting. That's something you don't read or hear about through western news or other sources. It's pretty good to know localized news," Patrick says.

As a son-in-law in a Chinese family, Patrick has well adapted himself to the Chinese way of living. He's sort of a baby in the big family. His wife even complains that her parents treat Patrick better than treat her.

During the Chinese Lunar New Year, Patrick usually goes over to his wife's parents house and do traditional things like getting together, making dumplings and staying for midnight. Throughout the week, Patrick and his wife would visit his wife's relatives around Beijing.

One of the Chinese traditions during the Spring Festival is giving "hongbao" (money wrapped in a piece of red paper) to kids, Patrick is not an exception. "Actually, my wife has talked to me about the money giving and I have to give money to all of our relatives' kids. The first time I think I gave 100 yuan and now I give 200 yuan. It's doubled, just like the economy, growing and growing."

Keen Reader from The First Day

By Xiaoxia

Yann Thefaine was as neat and radiant when he received *Beijing Today's* Spring Festival greetings at the Air France Beijing office as when he first stepped into the building of Beijing Youth Daily. The calmness and elegance of the Regional Marketing Manager still lingered in the editorial room even though several months had already passed.

Yann is the first reader to respond to *Beijing Today*. After reading the story of a young girl in Sanlitun, titled *Making It In The Market*, in the first issue he shared his opinion with the editorial department.

Yann suggested an Air France Chinese interpreter should be interviewed. The story of a real bridge between Western and Eastern cultures would be an interesting story to the readers.

Spring Festival seems a lot to Chinese, while to Yann, happiness and leisure on the white sands of south China may be the best reward for his hard work. When Chinese are all enjoying a family union, *Beijing Today* wishes him a prosperous 2002.

Although this is her first time in China, Ardak Assylbekova from Kazakhstan already has a happy Spring Festival memory to cherish.

When the *Beijing Today* reporter gave Ardak a Spring Festival greeting, she said, "I've already had a pre-Spring Festival." When she was studying Chinese at the Kazakhstan International University in her hometown, her schoolmates and teachers decided to celebrate Spring Festival according to Chinese custom. Ardak's fun-

Had a Spring Festival Already

By Zhu Lin

At just 19 years of age, Ardak is the youngest international student in the Chinese Center of Beijing University. "I found there were so many interesting things around me at the Chinese Center! I'm so happy!" She waved her arms to express her excitement, "I didn't expect to see classmates from so many nationalities."

Ardak said she was most interested in knowing traditions and distinctions of different countries. She's looking forward to seeing how the Chinese people really spend their Spring Festival three days later.

niest memory is the Chinese Dance with fans they performed in the celebration based on their hazy knowledge about the dance.

The foreign students living in Beijing are one of the major readers of *Beijing Today* and have given her a lot of support. In order to express our appreciation and celebrate the festival with them, we visited one of them to extend our Spring Festival greetings. Ardak was interviewed and her story now appears on the New Year Special of *Beijing Today*.

At just 19 years of age, Ardak is the youngest international student in the Chinese Center of Beijing University. "I found there were so many interesting things around me at the Chinese Center! I'm so happy!" She waved her arms to express her excitement, "I didn't expect to see classmates from so many nationalities."

Ardak said she was most interested in knowing traditions and distinctions of different countries. She's looking forward to seeing how the Chinese people really spend their Spring Festival three days later.

Grateful for Living in China

By Chen Ying

At his office, Michael Primont is watching a game of American National Football League on TV in a leisure morning eight days before the Lunar New Year.

After receiving *Beijing Today's* best wishes for him in the coming year, Mr. Primont also expresses thanks for the wonderful welcome that he always feels in China. "Chinese people pay special attention to others, and even the strangers in the street. That gives you a very good feeling, especially when you know nothing the first time in China. Thank you for including me in your life in China."

Mr. Primont picked up *Beijing Today* at the hall of Hilton Hotel, his work place, accidentally, and liked the paper immediately.

Described as "the ambassador of Chinese film", Michael Primont, the managing director of American company Cherry Lane Music, frequently shows Chinese movies with English subtitles at the theatre of the Sino-Japanese Youth Exchange Center three Fridays' evening every month, introducing the best and latest Chinese films to foreigners living in Beijing.

Beijing Today appreciates his enthusiasm to propagate Chinese film and culture to foreigners. With his permission, *Beijing Today* usually distributes about one hundred free copies before a film begins.

"Audiences like reading the paper. It's a new departure for journalism. It looks much more like a western newspaper. It feels very modern and has a nice layout. Some of the articles are very interesting," Mr. Primont commented the paper.

Spring Festival Guangzhou-style

By Shan Jinliang

"2002 is my year of the Horse, I hope it will bring me luck," said Claes Barnsten, a Swedish reader, when he received *Beijing Today's* Spring Festival greetings.

"This will be my first Spring Festival experience in China and I am planning to go to Guangzhou," said Barnsten.

Barnsten had featured in *Beijing Today* on January 18. As he was not in Beijing when the copy was printed, his friend, Zhu Hongying, had to go to Liu Baohu, the newspaper vendor by Shuangjing Bridge on February 1. "I want to buy all the copies of *Beijing Today* of January 18," she said, assuming that he would offer ten copies. "I'll fetch them for you from home and you can get them tomorrow," said Liu.

The next day Liu gave her a huge shock: he had collected 60 copies from others and left one for himself. She had to fulfill her promise, and bought them all with 118 yuan. "Anyway, I can distribute them to my friends," said Barnsten.

When asked what he wants to say to *Beijing Today* readers, he e-mailed us after the interview, saying, "I wish all readers of *Beijing Today* a happy and prosperous Lunar Year of the Horse with one exception. If Sweden is to meet China in a quarterfinal in the World Cup in Japan or Korea, I really hope Sweden will be the team to reach the semifinal!"



A Day-by-Day Guide To Spring Festival

Traditionally speaking for old Chinese, the Spring Festival actually begins from 8

December of the Chinese lunar calendar.

The following is the list of things people do throughout the whole festival season. Please note that the dates indicated are from the Chinese calendar.

In the Chinese lunar calendar, December is called '腊月 (layue)'

and January is called '正月 (zhengyue)'.

This year layue started from 13

January to 11 February of the Gregorian Calendar, thus the first day of the Spring Festival, zhengyue will begin on 12 February.

January 20

腊月初八

The beginning of the holiday season. Eat laba porridge (腊八粥), and make laba garlic and vinegar(腊八蒜) for later use on the Spring Festival day.

February 4

腊月二十三

Sacrifices including Chinese malt candies are offered to the kitchen god. It was also called '小年 (xiaonian)', meaning that the family may have a small banquet with family members reunited.

February 5

腊月二十四

Cleaning day. People dismantle last year's décor, and pin up new Spring Festival pictures.

Why do we pin the character

福 upside down?

By Miao Yajie

Spring Festival couplets, pictures, and the character for good fortune (春联, 年画, 福字) are the three main house decorations during the coming holiday. And as many may have noticed, the Chinese pin the character for good fortune, fu (福), upside down. This custom comes along with its own history dating back to the beginning of the Ming Dynasty (1368-1644).

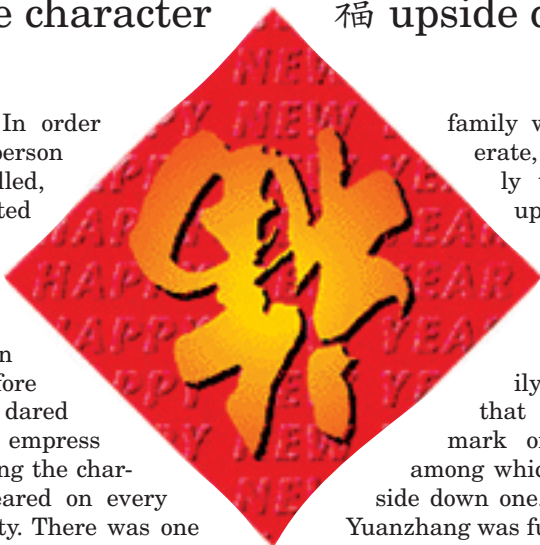
It is said that the first Ming emperor Zhu Yuanzhang wanted to kill one of his people. He put a the character 福 on the man's door as a

secret mark. In order to save the person from being killed, the kind-hearted Empress Ma ordered all the city residents to pin up 福 on their doors before dawn. No one dared to offend the empress so next morning the character 福 appeared on every door in the city. There was one

family who were illiterate, so unexpectedly they stuck 福 upside down. The second day, the imperial guards headed for the target family, and found that there was a mark on every door, among which even an upside down one. Emperor Zhu Yuanzhang was furious when he

heard what had happened, and ordered the guards to execute the entire family. In order to cool the emperor down, Empress Ma said, "The family knew you were going to visit them today, so they intentionally pinned 福 upside down, doesn't this mean that good fortune has arrived?" The emperor thought what the empress said was reasonable, so he cancelled the death order, and a disaster was prevented.

Since then, people have begun to pin the character 福 upside down, for good luck and to commemorate Empress Ma.



A traditional Spring Festival picture

Bring in New Year with a Bang

By Qi Shou

Spring Festival (春节), as its name implies, celebrates the coming of spring. The annual harvest celebration held in the Zhou Dynasty (1121-771BC), though in November of the lunar calendar, was considered the origin of the Spring Festival.

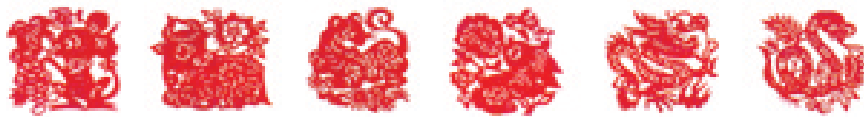
Celebrating Spring Festival on January 1 of the lunar calendar started from the Western Han Dynasty (206BC-24AD). January 1 was called New Year (元旦) at that time. After 1911, China adapted the Gregorian Calendar, which makes two New Years in one year quite complicated. The New Year on the lunar calendar then changed to be called the Spring Festival ever since.

As to why Spring Festival is also called '过年 (guonian)' the most popular story highlights the custom of setting off fire-crackers.

In ancient times, a monster called '年 (nian)' came to villages to eat people on every lunar New Year's Eve. People tried every trick in the book, but still couldn't kill the monster. The only possible way of survival was to head for the mountains to escape nian. One New Year's Eve, when everybody was hurrying to get away, an old man with a long white beard showed up in the village. He asked to stay in the village for a night and drive the monster away.

The villagers tried to talk him out of it, but failed, and left the old man alone in the village.

At midnight, the monster nian arrived in the village, he found one house was brightly lit up. When he rushed towards the gate of the house, a sudden, violent crackling broke out. Nian was scared to death. Because the color red, fire and crackling were the three things the monster was most scared of. The monster ran away and never came back. But the custom keeps going year after year.



Where do Those Animals Come from?

By Jian Hu

Many different opinions as to the origin of the Chinese zodiac animals circulate up and down history. Some think the zodiac animals share the same origin with the twelve Earthly Branches, which possibly date back to the pre-history era. Others think they originated from nomadic tribes in the north. Some even think that the twelve animals were imported from ancient Babylon. However, many people may agree with the following hypothesis: that the animals stemmed from the ancient Chinese worship for animals, from the totem, and the early knowledge of astronomy.

The earliest record of the symbolic animals was found in the *Book of Songs* (《诗经》). In the Eastern Han Dynasty (25-220AD), Wang Chong's book, the names and the order of the twelve animals were already the same with what we have nowadays. In the Northern and Southern Dynasties (420-589), there was a poem written about the symbolic animals, proving that at that time people were familiar with them. The choice of the twelve animals is connected closely with the daily and social life of the people of the Han nationality.

The twelve animals can be divided into three categories: one is the six tamed animals, ox, sheep, horse, hog, dog, and cock that were tamed for economic and other reasons, and that occupy half of the total number. The 'six domestic animals' is an important concept in ancient agriculture. In the traditional Chinese mind, that 'the six domestic animals are all thriving' represents that the family has a flourishing population, lucky and prosperous. It's no wonder that the six animals be-

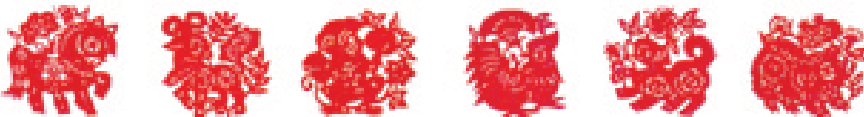
came the symbolic animals. The second category is the wild animals that people were most familiar with. Tiger, rabbit, monkey, rat and snake. Some were frightening, such as the tiger, snake; some were disgusting, such as the rat; some were beloved, such as the rabbit and monkey. The last category is the traditional symbolic mascot, the dragon.

What about their order? Experts have their academic explanations. While ordinary people are familiar with the following version:

Once upon a time, Huang Di (黄帝) wanted to choose twelve animals to serve as the imperial guards. The cat asked the rat to register for him, but the rat forgot, and the cat lost the chance, then the two became enemies ever since. The elephant came to compete, too, and the rat ran into his trunk and drove him away. The ox ranked the top among the rest of the animals, but the rat jumped onto the back of the ox, and the hog jeered at the rat. So at last, the rat became the champion, with the hog occupying last place. The tiger and the dragon refused to accept the order, so they were entitled as the 'King of the mountain' and the 'King of the sea', and were listed after the rat and the ox. The rabbit had a race with the dragon, and ran faster than the dragon. Then the dog was not happy, so he bit the rabbit, and as a punishment was listed second from last. After serious competition, the order of the snake, horse, sheep, and monkey was all settled. That's what we have for now, as follows:

Rat, ox, tiger, rabbit, dragon, snake, horse, sheep, monkey, cock, dog, and hog.

This year is the Year of the Horse, and wishing people have the spirit of the dragon and the horse (龙马精神) are among the most popular greetings.



Zodiac animals in paper cut

Money under Pillow Keeps Monster Away

By Xuan Zhang

On the Eve of Spring Festival, every child receives gift money (压岁钱) from the elder members of the family. This tradition is said to have appeared for the first time in the Han Dynasty (206BC-220AD). They were presented in currency form, but were not circulated on the market. On one front side of the coin were usually inscribed lucky words and designs of dragon, phoenix, tortoise, snake, and twin fish, which had the function of escaping evil. As to the origin of the gift money, the folklore goes like this: There was a monster named sui (祟). He came out every Spring Festival Eve to stroke sleeping children's heads. Those who were stroked would get high fever, and turn to a fool after the fever departed. People were afraid their kids would be hurt by the monster, so they stayed up the whole night with lights on.

An old couple cherished their son very much, and so in order to keep him awake, the mother and father gave the kid eight bronze coins wrapped in red paper. The boy wrapped and unwrapped the coin package, and finally fell asleep with the package under his pillow. At midnight, the monster 祟 came: just when he was about to stroke the boy's head, a light came out from under the pillow, which made the monster scream and ran away. The second day, people nearby heard about this, so they all followed and wrapped coins for their children, and since then the monster never returned.

The custom still prevails, but with new trends. It is reported that many parents have bought the new Euro memorial set as gift money for their children this year.

February 6

腊月二十五

Paste the windows with Korean papers. This is an old custom from when many windows in a courtyard didn't have glass windows. Also Spring Festival couplets, 福 character meaning good fortune, and paper-cuts will be pinned up on this day.

February 11

大年三十

The Eve of Spring Festival. Family reunion. Banquet together. Have fun and stay up the whole night. In Chinese it's called '守岁 (shousui)'. At twelve o'clock midnight, eat dumplings (jiaozi) together.

February 12

正月初一

From the first day to the fifth day, people pay New Year calls to relatives, friends and colleagues, or to go to the temple fairs.

February 13

正月初二

Married daughter with husband and family spends the day with her parents.

February 16

正月初五

Traditionally, all stores will be open for business from this day on.

February 26

正月十五

The Lantern Festival. People eat sweet dumplings (元宵). All kinds of lanterns will be hung around the main streets of the city. People go out to admire the lanterns and guess the riddles. The holiday season ends on the Lantern Festival day.



1950s Singing Spring Festival to the Masses

By Zhu Lin

Gao Fuming, a 74-year-old Beijing opera performer spent Spring Festivals during the 1950s on theatrical tours. They kept a tradition of performing around the country in the '50s in a tour called the Spring Festival Salutation Concert to the Masses.

"There were so few cultural activities in the 1950s and wherever we went, people were so excited," Gao laughed, "Queues were much longer than you see nowadays." In order to get a ticket, some of the opera fans even brought a



Guo and his wife married in 1953

bedroll with them to camp outside the box office the previous night.

Chinese people at that time were not so open, and most likely they only expressed their happiness through rounds of hysterical and drawn-out applause.

The tour went to factories, farms and army barracks, and after each performance, they would be treated to a meal. Among these, Gao's favorite place was the army. "Because the meal offered by the army was enough to fill my stomach." The dishes

were served in huge basins, as big as the water basins in Beijing markets today. There were three basins of dishes each meal and the best one was stewed pork in large cubes. "We didn't mind whether the pork was fat or lean," Gao said, "Not like the picky people of today!"

Another interesting story about pork came back to Gao's memory. In 1950, Gao's opera theater staged the opera Long March in Beijing and enjoyed a great success. Xiao Hua, Director of the General Political Department of China PLA at that time was very satisfied with the performance. "You will be rewarded 250 kg of pork!" he promised in his strong Sichuan accent.

1960s Recalling Spring Festival Separation

By Xiao Xia

Spring Festival is absolutely the most sacred time of year for family reunion in China. Wang Yinjia was forced to spend this most important of family celebrations away from home in 1964 during a winter that changed his life.

"My mother was arrested on December 26, 1964 under the name of Anti-Revolution without any warning," recalled Wang. His family was attacked by a sudden political storm.



Wang Yinjia (Center in front) with his classmates in 1962

Wang's mother, a high-ranking government official was thrown into prison without trial or even an arrest warrant. At the time Wang was a college student of the China Central Institute of Fine Arts.

"It was my grandmother who came to inform me of the news," Wang said. He still clearly remembered two men in blue coats following his grandmother to the gate of the institute. The grandmother warned the young man not to go

back for Spring Festival because their home was under supervision.

Wang Yinjia had to spend his first Spring Festival at college away from his family. "Though our family was not well off financially, Spring Festival was the same as in other families, happy and united." Although the separation was heart breaking, Wang still kept strong faith. "I believed in my mother and I knew her personality," Wang said firmly.

It was when Deng Xiaoping came back to the government 11 years later, that Wang's mother regained her freedom. Mother and son were finally reunited.

1970s I'm Going to College!

By Zhu Lin

Liu Xuehong spent the 1978 Spring Festival waiting for her admission note to Beijing University. In December 1977, ten million Chinese took part in the first College Entrance Test that had been suspended for ten years during the Cultural Revolution. Now 45 years old, Liu was one of them.

Liu finished high school in 1975 and went to work at Miyun, in the outskirts of Beijing. The news about the



Liu's exam admission card in 1977

revival of the College Entrance Test was announced in October and she decided to try. But most of her friends and relatives didn't take it seriously. "Who knows whether or not you can make it! It's been ten years after all." Finally she could no longer spare any time for them. She got her mother to lock the door from the outside and she ignored any knocking.

Her anxiety vanished

with a gift from heaven. One evening in January, her father handed her a newspaper when she was reading at home. "Is it you?" he asked. She then saw her name and "During This Revolutionary Year", her article written for the Chinese examination. It was published in the People's Daily.

During the Spring Festival, when her family members, friends and neighbors got together, she became the hottest topic. "Everybody living in the yard knew about my story!" Liu laughed.

In March 1978, she walked into the place she had so longed for - the Journalism Program in the Chinese Department of Beijing University.

1980s A Prosperous New Year

By Shi Xinyu

The 1980s were a period full of opportunities. The greatest benefit of that time was the opportunity to choose a job, rather than taking the ones allotted to us.

So begins Li Shiqiang, a 55-year-old man who resigned from a factory in 1984 and ran a private bookstore in 1988 together with his wife who also quit her job in 1985.

The couple says the eve of the 1988 Spring Festival is indelible in their memories.

"We even did not notice that day was Spring Festival eve," said Liu Yuansheng, the wife, "We planned to open the bookstore the following May, and we were quite busy renovating the old house at

that time. I remember that day's work was to brush down the inner walls. Lao Li and I and several friends, altogether about ten people, began in the very early morning. After all the work was finished, we all sat on the floor, too tired to say a word. It was late and we had eaten nothing the whole day. Suddenly, the sound of firecrackers burst out loudly outside. One friend looked at his watch and said to us in a soft tone: Good luck to your bookstore in the dragon year."



Li and his wife in their bookstore

Photo by Zhuang Jian

"All our friends said encouraging words to us at that moment," Li Shiqiang continues, "That made Lao Li and I feel quite warm. You know, at that time it was an adventure to give up our jobs because we would lose all the welfare that would guarantee a 'safe' life."

After the working Spring Festival, Li and Liu's bookstore opened on time in May 1988 and has successfully run up to now. "We just grasped the chance," Li concludes.

1990s A Lonely Spring Festival

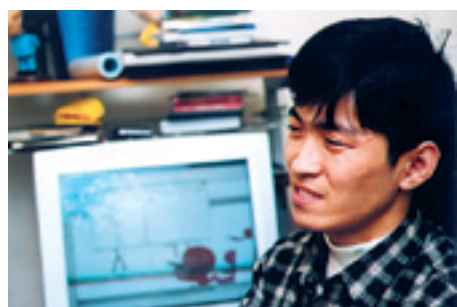


Photo by Zhuang Jian

By Zhao Pu

Migrant labor from the countryside has been pouring into big cities over the past decade, making the immigrant population in cities like Beijing and Shanghai snowball. Most of them probably have stories of spending Spring Festival alone in the big cities away from their families, both happy and sad.

Xiao Xiao, one of China's top flash-makers, aged 25, experienced a 'forlorn' Spring Festival in Beijing in 1999. The young talented designer came to Beijing five years ago from his home in Jilin province, northeast China, as a gold digger cherishing a dream for animation design.

"That was a hard time in my life, I lost my job and was broken. I couldn't afford to buy a train ticket back home for the lunar New Year," Xiao Xiao recalled. He was fired by his Taiwanese boss in Beijing in the summer of 1998, and the following six months were destitute until he found the second job in 1999.

"There was only 200 yuan left in my pocket on the eve of the Spring Festival. I phoned my parents at home and told them that I didn't want to return for the festival, and kept my embarrassing sit-

uation from them," he smiled recalling his first Chinese New Year away from home.

He stayed in his small room in the north suburbs of Beijing, listening to the firecrackers outside and playing computer games all night. "The New Year's eve dinner was mutton hot pot," he remembered his first Spring Festival without dumplings.

That Spring Festival in 1999 was a turning point in his life. Since then, Beijing has been treating him better and better. He found a new job several days after the festival and has been going from strength to strength in his design career ever since.

That must be the loneliest Spring Festival in his life. He concludes, "maybe there will be some more in the future, who knows?"

Focus the Spring Festival



February 14 1957, 10,000 soldiers, workers, peasants and students were dancing at the Spring Festival Party in the Ancestral Temple to the north of the Tian'anmen Square.

In the first decade after 1949, army played an important role in social life.

Photo by Shi Panqi



February 5 1962, a peasant family was making dumplings on the Chinese lunar New Year at home in Haidian District.

The five characters on the red banner on the wall: 总路线万岁, literally means 'long live the general line'.

The decade of 1960s was a time of frequent political movements. Political sense penetrated into the daily life of the public.

Photo by Liu Qingrui

January 29 1974, people bustling in the Spring Festival Flower Market in Guangzhou, Guangdong province in south China. Life was getting better at the end of the Cultural Revolution (1966-1976).

Xinhua Photo



February 17, 1985, Hongkong actress Lisa Wong in the rehearsal for the CCTV Spring Festival Party, in the Beijing Worker's Stadium.

China became more and more opened in the 80s both in the social and in the moral way.

Lisa Wong was the first Hong Kong actress invited to the CCTV party.

Photo by Huang Jingda

Children happily choosing fancy lanterns at a Spring Festival temple fair in Nanjing. Social fortune stepped into a fast accumulating period. People enjoyed life in 90s.

Photo by Chai Jijun





GREETINGS

拜 年



Afghanistan

Busy Counselor Wishes China, Afghanistan Peace

Counselor Abdul Basir Hotak of the Islamic State of Afghanistan has a hectic workload as the Spring Festival draws near.

"Since Afghanistan has just begun its reconstruction, I have a lot of work to do over the holiday. However I hope to spare some time to visit the Summer Palace and the Great Wall," he said.

"The Afghan community in Beijing is very small, only nine people including myself and my secretary. Some are studying here while others are running businesses. On the occasion of the Chinese New Year, I would like to wish them a happy and successful year," he said.

Actually, the Afghan people celebrate their New Year, called "Nawroze", in a similar way to the Chinese, on March 21, he told *Beijing Today*. According to Afghan tradition, it is a one-day holiday, but the celebration would last for a week before the holiday. People cook a traditional vegetable dish, visit exhibitions and play buzkashi, a traditional game with similarities to polo, involving two teams of horsemen and a calf, as well as following the ancient tradition of praying for rain in the coming year. Visitors are met with gifts of fruit and the greeting "Wishing you a fruitful, successful and happy New Year".

At the end of the interview, the counselor wrote down his wishes to all the Afghan and Chinese people:

"Wishing peace and stability in Afghanistan and strengthening further the good relations that already exists between the Chinese and Afghan people."

By Shan Jinliang



Bulgaria

China is Amazing

Bulgarian Ambassador Dimitar Tzvetanov Tzanev, a Ph.D. in modern history, describes Beijing as one of the world's leading cities in terms of politics, economics and science.

He has great respect for the Chinese people, who hold big family gatherings during the Spring Festival and admires those who travel thousands of kilometers to go home for the family reunion.

Ambassador Tzanev says he is amazed by the fantastic speed of development made by the Beijing government and is confident that with China's recent WTO entry and the holding of the 2008 Olympics, Beijing will see even more progress. The ambassador wishes the Bulgarian community here and all Beijingers to share the happiness of the coming festival. He strongly encourages Bulgarians in Beijing to join local families to celebrate the Spring Festival.

By Wang Dandan



Australia

Short Message from Down Under

Due to an extremely heavy workload, Australian ambassador David Irvine was not available for an interview with *Beijing Today*. However, he did take the time to write the following Spring Festival greeting to our readers.

"As we enter the Year of the Horse, the relationship between the peoples of China and Australia continues to strengthen.

Interest among Chinese in Australia has never been greater, particularly in the wake of the Sydney 2000 Olympic Games. Chinese tourism to Australia is booming, and young Chinese continue to flock to Australia.

Australians are also increasingly recognizing the importance of China, both as a partner for Australia and as a major power in the region. An increasing number of Australians are choosing to study Mandarin as one of the key international languages of the 21st century, and many are coming to visit or work in China – about a quarter of a million last year.

Australians also value the important contribution made to Australia's multicultural society by our Chinese-Australian community, and more and more Australians of diverse backgrounds enthusiastically join in celebrations of Spring Festival in Australia.

I would like to wish the Chinese people and our many Australian colleagues who live here and contribute daily to the strength of the bilateral relationship a very happy and prosperous Year of the Horse."

By Shi Xinyu



Canada

Enjoy Day, Together

Canadian Ambassador Joseph Caron flew back to his homeland yesterday morning. Before leaving, he wrote a message to the readers of *Beijing Today*.

"On the Eve of the Chinese New Year, I would like to wish everyone living in Beijing a wonderful New Year! May the Year of the Horse bring each and everyone of you health and prosperity. As ambassador to China, I hope that the Sino-Canadian fine relationship becomes even closer and richer in the year 2002. Becoming involved in the New Year festivities is one of the ways of getting to know each other better.

Many Canadians now live in Beijing and I'm sure that a number of them will be staying in Beijing during the 10-day festival. Some will visit their friends and some will go to the festivals at the Temple of the Earth or the Temple of the White Cloud. There are diverse cultural activities to participate in and something for everyone, young and old, Chinese as well as foreigners.

So, let's all enjoy it together! Happy New Year, everyone!"

By Yang Xiao



Austria

Made in China Is Good

"Heartfelt congratulations to our Chinese friends, with happiness and prosperity in the Year of Horse," are the wishes from the Ambassador of the Republic of Austria Erich Buttenhauser to *Beijing Today's* readers on a sunny winter's morning in the city.

Ambassador Buttenhauser first came to China 26 years ago, as First Secretary from the country of music. He describes Beijing as a peaceful and elegant city, saying "I have known this city for 26 years and seen how it has developed." He especially loves the ancient aspects of Beijing, including Houhai Lake, the hutongs and the Temple of Heaven Park.

Besides mentioning the successful cultural and economic exchanges between the two countries, Ambassador Buttenhauser especially stresses those between youngsters. "Anything concerning young people is of the utmost importance, because they are the decision makers of tomorrow."

Architecture, museums and markets are the ambassador's recommendation of items of interest to *Beijing Today* readers. "Beijing is full of nice museums. You should show them to the public."

At the end of the interview, Ambassador Buttenhauser expressed deep interest in the reporter's digital recorder. He even asked his secretary to get one for the embassy. After finding that China, Japan and Korea all produce them, comes the answer, "Made in China is good!"

By Zhang Xiaoxia



Cuba

Eat Jiaozi with Old Friends

Sitting in the Cuban Embassy VIP room, Ambassador Alberto Rodriguez Arufe chats about Beijing snacks. Ambassador Arufe works very long hours, but if he has time, Beijing roast duck from around Qianmen is his top choice.

"I have lived here for more than two years. There are so many restaurants in Beijing. Even if I try one each day, I could never try them all. I think the roast duck is my favorite."

As his Chinese is not fluent, the ambassador often carries a special menu in his pocket. The menu lists his favorite dishes, in Spanish, Chinese characters and pinyin. When ordering food, he often reads Spanish, and then spells Chinese. If the waiter does not understand his Cuban Chinese, he will show the Chinese characters.

In accordance with Chinese tradition, the Cuban Embassy will close during Spring Festival. "There are about 10 Cuban students studying in Beijing. We will invite all of them to have jiaozi during the holiday. Cubans like jiaozi very much! I like pork filling, and my wife likes vegetarian."

The ambassador hopes to see even closer Sino-Cuban cultural relations. The embassy will hold a series of cultural exchange activities in the near future, and he revealed that by the end of this year, the first Cuban cigar department store will open in Beijing. Also a multi-functional cultural exchange center, including arts and specialty facilities and snack food will open here in two years' time.

By Yang Xiao



Belgium

Historian Ambassador: China No Going Back

"The Tang and Song Dynasties reached the highest level of civilization in Chinese history. Do you know why? Because of the free trade with the rest of the world."

For Belgian ambassador Johan Maricou, Chinese history is a favorite topic.

"The reason that China develops so rapidly in these recent 20 years is due to the opening up policy made in 1979. China was poor 20 years ago, but there's no going back now. I do believe China will have a very prosperous future."

The ambassador is fascinated with Chinese temple culture. "I have been to Wu Tai Mountain five times. I travel a lot around China and often visit those old temples in Beijing, such as Tanzhe, Jietai and the Lama Temple." When he has time, he likes to bicycle around Beijing's old hutongs. "At that time, nobody knows I am an ambassador," he said.

Mentioning that the coming year is the Year of the Horse, the ambassador said, "The horse is a hard-working animal, I wish everybody – work hard and all the best in this great year."

Talking about Belgium and the Beijing 2008 Olympics, Ambassador Maricou said with a smile, "Jacques Rogge is an international person, but of course he is Belgian. Whatever we can contribute to the great Olympics, I'm sure the Chinese and Belgian governments and peoples will have an even more stable communication and cooperation."

By Li Dan



Chile

Scholar Ambassador: Do Not Drink Too Much

Chilean Ambassador Benny Pollack is a gentleman with a black beard and a mustache. With his sagacious eyes hidden behind a pair of glasses, he seems more like a scholar than an ambassador.

Although he has only lived here for several months, the ambassador expresses his love for this country, a country full of vigor and energy, and developing at a rapid pace. Asked about his impression of the Chinese people, he highly compliments them as being very friendly, saying he is often warmly greeted by strangers on the street.

A Ph.D. in politics, the ambassador holds the title of Emeritus Professor, bestowed upon him by the University of Liverpool, where he used to teach. He is also interested in future contacts with the Beijing academic world, as he has a deep interest in Chinese culture.

As for his wishes to the Chilean community and Beijingers, Ambassador Pollack wishes them all a happy Spring Festival and reminds everyone: Don't drink too much!

By Wang Dandan





Ole Lonsmann Poulsen

Denmark

Heard About Spring Festival as Child

Ole Lonsmann Poulsen, ambassador, Royal Danish Embassy, said he first learnt about China's lunar New Year's Day, the Spring Festival as a child, "I heard about it from the press, because there were not so many Chinese living in Denmark at that time."

Ambassador Ole Lonsmann Poulsen assumed his new assignment as ambassador in Beijing last September. But he said he had settled in well and adjusted to the way of life here.

"I visited China in 1985, 1989 and 1996. So far as I know, Beijing has changed a lot and is rapidly turning into an international modernized city. And definitely, I am very glad to spend my first Spring Festival in Beijing."

Asked to send greetings to Chinese people and his Danish compatriots in China, the ambassador told our reporter that currently, 1,200 Danish were working, studying and living in China.

"I want to tell my fellow countrymen: what you are doing here is a worthy investment in your future, to bilateral relations, no matter whether you are doing business or studying."

"All of you can act as a bridge between our two countries and peoples."

Finally, at the request of our reporter, Ambassador Poulsen learnt how to present greetings to others during the Spring Festival, as shown in the picture.

"Gong Xi Fa Cai!"

By Zhao Hongyi



Ioannidis Theophanopoulos
Ambassador of Greece

Olympic Wishes to Beijing

With a dark traditional Chinese tunic suit, Ambassador Ioannidis Theophanopoulos of Greece, walked into his Chinese style parlor with a handsome smile.

"Is my dress good or not?" was his first utterance to the *Beijing Today* reporter. In his hand was a small note with two Chinese traditional greetings for Spring Festival.

"To our Chinese friends, I wish 'Bai Zao Nian' for the New Year of the Horse," said the ambassador seriously, though not completely accurate in pronunciation.

This year will be the first time for Ambassador Theophanopoulos to spend the Spring Festival here in Beijing. "My wife and my eldest daughter will go to Germany, but I will stay here with the two other younger children."

The ambassador knows exactly how long he has stayed in Beijing. "It's two years, eight months and seven days. If you like something, you will remember it accurately."

The ambassador said he was confident that Beijing would hold a successful Olympic Games. "I'm deeply impressed by the great changes that have happened in Beijing in the past two years. Besides, you have more time to prepare," encouraged Ambassador Theophanopoulos.

By Xiao Rong



علي الحفني

Egypt

Egypt, China Witness Broad Prospects for Cooperation

"Welcome to our embassy," said Aly Houssein El-Din El-Hefny, Egyptian ambassador when he appeared in the reception parlor designed with traditional Egyptian features.

Ambassador El-Hefny said he had already fallen in love with Beijing even though he just took office four months ago. Also as Egyptian ambassador to Mongolia, Ambassador El-Hefny chooses to reside permanently in Beijing. "The city is very advanced, like New York, Tokyo, Los Angeles. My wife and three daughters all like Beijing very much."

The President of Egypt H.E. Mohamed Hosni Mubarak just visited China in January 2002, his eighth visit to the country. "Truly a resolute confirmation to the magnitude of our relations." Ambassador El-Hefny also predicted that there would be great progress in economic and trade cooperation between Egypt and China in the near future.

Ambassador El-Hefny maintains that since both Egypt and China have a long history, splendid culture and many historical sites and places of interest, therefore the two countries boast good conditions for the development of tourism.

Before finishing the interview, Ambassador El-Hefny asked *Beijing Today* to convey his sincere and heartfelt greetings to all Chinese people first, and specially the Beijingers with whom he lives and works closely with, and holds in high esteem. "It's the year of the horse, which means good luck. May all those who are seeking new opportunities and beginnings share this luck."

By Sun Ming



Supriatna

Indonesia

Strengthen Economic Cooperation with China

Aa Kustia, the Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of Indonesia, served in the Indonesian navy as a rear admiral for many years. However, when he showed up in his embassy's reception room, dressed in a very smart gray suit, he displayed no trace of a military career. When I told him so, Ambassador Kustia laughed and said, "Thank you. Then I'm a good actor."

"I'm happy. When I was appointed ambassador last June, the relationship between China and Indonesia was very beautiful, like a honeymoon, you know," said Ambassador Kustia. Since Chinese lunar new year is also a national holiday in Indonesia, Ambassador Kustia also used to receive gift money (压岁钱) from the elder Chinese relations of his family when he was a boy. Besides, the Indonesian-Chinese used to give Spring Festival cakes to their neighbors and relatives, a delicacy he hasn't found anywhere in Beijing. "Maybe because the Indonesian-Chinese are from around Fujian or Guangdong," he said.

This first Spring Festival in Beijing is going to be different, however, as he enjoys the hospitality of Beijingers and the food here.

"Gong Xi Fa Cai!" he says to everyone in Beijing.

By Miao Yajie



U. Manni

Finland

5,000 More Visas Issued

Benjamin Bassin, ambassador of Finland, said he was very much looking forward to celebrating the 2002 Spring Festival with Chinese friends, the first Spring Festival he would celebrate in China. He said that he was happy to see that the relationship between Finland and China was excellent and had no problems; his only job was to keep it.

He revealed that the embassy had issued 12,000 visas for Chinese applicants last year, while the number was 7,000 the year before. He was very pleased with the trend and hoped that group tours between the two counties would become possible in the near future after negotiation with the Chinese government.

The ambassador was satisfied with Finland's presence in China's economic construction. Finland's exports to China amounted to \$2 billion in 2001, and there are about 150 Finnish companies now investing in China.

He also said that 50 years ago in the Helsinki Olympic Games, the People's Republic of China returned to the international Olympic stage. In 2008, Finland hopes to cooperate with China in environmental protection and communication for the Beijing Olympic Games.

By Jiang Zhong



India

Festive Time for Us Too

"At present when Chinese people are welcoming the Spring Festival, India is also celebrating many festivals as well," said Shivshankar Menon, ambassador to China of the Republic of India.

Ambassador Menon will celebrate his eighth Chinese New Year with his wife Mohini Menon this year. He delivered a sincere greeting to both the Chinese people and Indian people for a happy and prosperous new year.

"I understand that Spring Festival is a time for Chinese people to enjoy family reunions and special food, which people in India do as well at some Indian festivals," said the ambassador. The 52-year-old Indian ambassador has spent seven Spring Festivals with his family and Chinese friends in Beijing.

Ambassador Menon explained that many Indian festivals occurred in January and February. There is also a Spring Festival in India in February, which is celebrated by the Indian people in welcoming the spring. "It's also an important festival in India, though it doesn't indicate the Indian New Year as the Chinese Spring Festival does in China."

The ambassador is very fond of Chinese food, "The first thing our Chinese teacher in India taught us was to make dumplings years ago." Though there are many popular Chinese restaurants in Delhi, he's still fascinated by the genuine Chinese dishes in Beijing. When asked about his favorite dish, he cited "dough twists (油条)", instead of roast duck or Gong Bao chicken.

By Zhao Pu



Sino-UK Relations Cover Broad Range

Ambassador of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Sir Anthony Galsworthy left Beijing a few days ago at the end of his tour of duty, and has now retired from the Diplomatic Service. On his behalf British embassy spokesman Alex Pinfield passed on their very best wishes to *Beijing Today* and all its readers on the occasion of the Spring Festival. Following is the greeting from the ambassador:

"I would like to pass on my very best wishes to *Beijing Today* and all its readers on the occasion of the Spring Festival. It is a festival that I have enjoyed very much over the years that I have been in China. It is a wonderful chance to meet some of my Chinese friends and colleagues in a less formal way, and for me to understand a bit more about the fine traditions that China has.

Relations between the UK and China are strong across a broad range of political, commercial and cultural areas. There are increasing numbers of visitors traveling between China and the UK, and not just at a senior government level. Whether they are traveling to study, do business, or just to have a holiday, more and more people of all sorts want to take advantage of the best our countries have to offer. I am sure this exchange will increase even further during the new year.



Italy

Spring Festival is Time to Enjoy Life

The ambassador of Italy, Paolo Bruni, extended his greetings to Italians in Beijing and Chinese people, while also allowing a glimpse at some splendid Italian art.

The ambassador of Italy is a man of taste and poise. "Spring Festival is a good chance for people to get together, to enjoy life. There are about 500 Italians in Beijing. Travelers enjoy exploring China."

The ambassador's residence is something like a museum, where paintings, antiques, and furniture are presented, mostly from 1500 to 1900. The displayed items come from various countries, including traditional furniture from China. One can see immediately that he takes an active interest in the arts. He often goes to Qianmen Theater to watch Beijing Opera.

"There is a something quite similar to Chinese jiaozi in Italy with various fillings of vegetables and meat".

"Maybe I will get together with my friends during the Spring Festival Holiday."

By Jiao Pei



Photos by Jackey / Zhuang Jian / Lily / Chen Shuyi / Qu Liyan





محمد السادس
في الملكة المغربية

Morocco

We Share Family Values

The horse is the symbol of health in Morocco. Mehdi Mimoun, the ambassador of the Kingdom of Morocco wishes Moroccan and Chinese people could be as healthy as a horse in the Chinese Horse Year 2002.

The 56-year-old ambassador is very busy this week, for the King of Morocco, Mohammed VI, is making his first state visit to China since he became king in 1999. Even on the morning of our interview, Ambassador Mehdi has to meet a Moroccan delegation for the royal visit. But almost every half hour, he calls his secretary apologizing for being unable to be back at the scheduled time.

He greatly values the resemblance between China and his country. "In Moroccan families, the old enjoy respect. We pay close attention to family ties. So it is in China."

He regards the role of father and mother in a Moroccan family as the same as in China. "I do not mean that mother should take all the responsibility of taking care of the children." He suggests the mother arrange the children's life as a whole, but that the father needs to be involved. "It's just a kind of strategy, you know."

Ambassador Mehdi says he will be proud to help the Chinese men's football team prepare for the World Cup and stage friendly football matches between Morocco and China, which will be the first in history. "We have football players in the Chinese clubs. We are happy to provide some experts to China."

He also believes that he will come to Beijing in 2008 as a visitor to see the most wonderful Olympic Games ever in the world.

By Su Wei



Dato' A.K. Majid

Malaysia

Enjoying Beijing Winter Soup

The ambassador of Malaysia extends his Spring Festival greetings to his compatriots and the people of Beijing as the 2002 Spring Festival draws near.

The ambassador of Malaysia, Dato' A.K. Majid, has spent altogether eight years in Beijing, and came with fond memories of the city as he spent his honeymoon here in 1980. He became ambassador in 1998.

"Last year was very successful for China. China made great achievements, such as the successful bid for the 2008 Olympics, and entry into WTO. I hope that this year, the horse year, China will improve its economy and people's living standards. China will develop faster over the next six years between 2002 to 2008 in preparation for the Olympics."

"Malaysians also celebrate the Spring Festival, because it is the greatest festival for the local Chinese. We celebrate it in the same way as China does. People have family reunions, make food, and visit relatives and friends during the holiday."

The ambassador's favorite Chinese food is soup. "Drinking soup is just right in winter, I like almost all kinds of soups." The ambassador's wife and five children are all in Beijing, and are enjoying life here.

He likes to play golf in Beijing, the most popular sport in Malaysia. He has also made lots of Chinese friends here. Maybe he will collect some horse paintings in the horse year!

By Jiao Pei



李 2002/10/10 LAY

Mexico

Local Ambassador

Before the reporter met Sergio Ley Lopez, the ambassador of Mexico, she was told by the ambassador of Chile that Ambassador Lopez can speak Chinese. And apart from that, his father is a Chinese.

Ambassador Lopez's first visit to China was 18 years ago, in 1984, when reform and opening up had just begun in China. Eighteen years later, Ambassador Lopez cannot believe his eyes at how rapidly China has developed over the last two decades.

"Only the embassy area remains the same", said Ambassador Lopez, "Everything has totally changed! When I was here, Beijing only had the Second Ring Road, but now you are building the Fifth Ring Road!"

Talking about the friendship between Mexico and China, Ambassador Lopez regards it as a long-lasting friendship. As early as in the 19th century, many Chinese emigrated to Mexico to take part in local development.

Ambassador Lopez also likes collecting traditional furniture, and shows a great interest in Chinese culture.

Ambassador Lopez wishes a happy Spring Festival to everybody. He also extends the wish to his relatives in Guangdong, where his father was born, that the children should study hard. And he'd love it if they could all be future ambassadors.

By Wang Dandan



Rajeshwar Acharya

Nepal

Greetings from across Himalayas

Rajeshwar Acharya, ambassador of Nepal, is proud of the long history of his country and of the sound relationship between China and Nepal.

He cited many historical records and stories to prove that the relationship between the two countries could be regarded as an example of bilateral relationships around the world. He mentioned the White Stupa housed in the Miaoying Temple in Beijing designed and constructed by Nepalese architect Arnigo in 1271 several times during the interview. He called it the symbol of the friendship between China and Nepal. He also emphasized that Nepal was one of the few countries that first set up a diplomatic relationship with the People's Republic of China 50 years ago.

Ambassador Acharya enjoys living in Beijing very much, and often goes shopping with his wife. He bought most of the furniture in the embassy and his residence himself. He especially loves Chinese garments, and has bought a couple of Chinese garments for his family members.

He finally added that Nepal featured stunning landscapes and a large number of high mountains, among which eight were over 8,000 meters above sea level.

Nepal is also home to many magnificent temples. Ambassador Acharya hopes that more and more Chinese travelers will choose Nepal as a travel destination.

By Jiang Zhong



Riaz Hus-sain Khokhar

Pakistan

Greetings from Our Old Friend

"I'll stay with my family here in Beijing for Spring Festival. It's nice for us to have a Chinese celebration," said ambassador of Pakistan, Riaz Hus-sain Khokhar, as he spoke to *Beijing Today* in his embassy office furnished with ancient Chinese furniture.

The friendship between his motherland and China is also something he treasures. "As ambassador of Pakistan, a neighboring country, which has longstanding friendly relations and mutually beneficial cooperation with China, I am honored and delighted to share the joys of Spring Festival with the brotherly people of China."

Having been the ambassador of Pakistan to Bangladesh, India and the United States, Ambassador Khokhar described his responsibility of being the Pakistani ambassador to China as a great assignment.

"For me, this is really the best assignment. People here are friendly, receptive and cooperative, which is very important to Pakistan. We really cherish China's friendship. Every moment has been very enjoyable," Ambassador Khokhar said with sincerity.

Ambassador Khokhar joined in celebrating with jubilant Chinese on the unforgettable night of July 13 last year when he was in Tiananmen Square to share the high emotions of the city for its success in winning the Olympic bid.

"I warmly congratulated the mayor of Beijing for winning the Olympic bid. We were also very happy that China has become a member of the WTO and qualified for the World Cup. It's through many years of effort by China. You have every reason to be confident and proud of a more promising 2002," said Ambassador Khokhar.

"I will stay in Beijing in the special holiday to see interesting and colorful things happening here," Ambassador Khokhar said.

By Xiao Rong



Philip de Heer

Netherlands

Beijingers Deserve Time for Celebration and Pleasure

The ambassador of the Royal Netherlands Embassy to China Philip de Heer has returned home on business, and all the embassy staff are busy with Spring Festival activities and the 30th Netherlands-Mongolia anniversary celebration, which is going to be held on March 6. *Beijing Today's* interview was not able to take place as planned. However, a warm message from the Minister Plenipotentiary, Paul W. A. Schellekens, reached our hands yesterday morning:

"In tune with the good relations that exist between the Netherlands and China, I want to send my best wishes for the Spring Festival to the people of Beijing through *Beijing Today*."

The Beijing population is well known for its active and entrepreneurial spirit and deserves a time for celebration and pleasure after a year of hard work. For us foreigners it is always interesting to see the preparations for this typically Chinese holiday and we like to savour the general atmosphere of joy.

I will spend Chun Jie with my wife. If the weather permits, we might go skiing not far away from Beijing."

By Miao Yajie



John McKinnon

New Zealand

'Haere Mai' to New Zealand

Kept busy preparing for celebratory activities for New Zealand's Waitangi Day, which falls on February 6th since 1840, John McKinnon, ambassador of New Zealand gave his Spring Festival greetings through a letter to Beijingers, and New Zealanders in Beijing.

"The Editor
Beijing Today,
On the occasion of Spring Festival and the beginning of the year of the horse I wish to convey to your readers and to the people of Beijing the best wishes of the government and people of New Zealand on this auspicious occasion. Many people from Beijing and from throughout China will be visiting New Zealand over the Spring Festival holiday period. In our Maori language we say to them 'Haere Mai', welcome. I am confident they will have a pleasant and relaxing time in our country and return refreshed in body and spirit. To all of you we wish you success in the new year, *yi lu ping an, wan shi ru yi*."

John McKinnon
Ambassador of New Zealand"

By Shi Xinyu



Haakon B. Hjelde

Norway

'Spring Festival Is a Time for Family Gatherings'

Norwegian ambassador Haakon B. Hjelde was well prepared for our Spring Festival interview. Sitting in his official residence in the embassy, the ambassador, with his elegance and professional diplomatic skills, freely chatted with our reporter on the topic of the Chinese Spring Festival.

"I have stayed in Beijing as ambassador for two and half years. This is my third Spring Festival in China."

"Beijing, to foreigners like us, is really a place for relaxing. We enjoy the life here. Also Beijing is unique with its rich oriental culture and history."

Asked how he would spend his holidays in Beijing, Ambassador Hjelde told our reporter, "Our daughter will arrive in Beijing by the weekend. She is coming to Beijing specifically for the Spring Festival, which is a holiday for family gathering."

"We'll climb the Great Wall, go boating on Kunming Lake in the Summer Palace, visit museums with contemporary arts, like sculptures created by young Chinese artists, because they represent creativity and new trends of China."

"I would also like to present my Spring Festival greetings to the 500 Chinese currently studying in Norway," concluded the ambassador.

By Zhao Hongyi



Photos by Jackey / Wei Tong / East / Qu Liyan / Zhuang Jian



K. Burski
Poland

Chinese Transformation from Polish Viewpoint

Ksawery Burski, 64, has been the Polish ambassador to China since January 2000. It seems Ambassador Burski has been destined to be involved with China throughout his life, since he was a student at Beijing University 45 years ago.

Having spent some 10 years working in China since 1962, Ambassador Burski has witnessed the tremendous transformations that have occurred in this country. "In the past, you just celebrated new year once during a year. But now when you go to a restaurant, it seems that everybody is enjoying new year every day!"

He believes China was very successful in the last year, in having a very high GDP growth. Having joined the World Trade Organization, there are now even more opportunities for international economic competition. Poland is also a member of the WTO, and wants to strengthen its cultural, economic and trade relations with China.

Ambassador Burski often goes to bookstores in Beijing, since reading is one of his favorite hobbies. Being fluent in Chinese, he has read some Chinese books that even many Chinese people would consider obscure.

"I would like to wish all my Chinese friends and all the people living here a happy Chinese New Year, all the happiness, success and good health in the coming new year. We hope to have more communication with China this year," Ambassador Burski said.

By Chen Ying



Hutong Cycling
Great Experience
Switzerland

Hutong Cycling Great Experience

When *Beijing Today* called the Swiss Embassy to request an interview with Ambassador Dominique Dreyer last week, he was about to leave for home and unable to speak to us. However, the ambassador was kind enough to e-mail us his warmest greetings.

"One can only wish that the Year of the Horse would be a better year than the last one. I think we all have to work together to make it a year of peace and reconciliation.

Beijing people are very friendly and industrious. I wish I only had more time to see my many friends in Beijing more often. Beijing is a city with a wonderful and rich history. Walking or cycling through the hutongs of Beijing is a great experience that I recommend to all my foreign friends visiting the capital.

What makes my work most interesting and enjoyable are the many contacts and discussions I have with Chinese officials, relations or friends from all walks of life.

I like to read *Beijing Today*, and I hope it will give even more useful information about Beijing and about the cultural events that are taking place in the capital."

By Ivy Zhang



罗高寿
Russia

From Russia with Affection

"Wish you happiness, wish you health and wish you success in the Chinese Year of the Horse!" said Russian Federation ambassador Igor A. Rogachev in fluent Chinese.

The ambassador seldom has any spare time, but when he does, he likes to get out of town with his friends and family, climbing mountains and swimming in lakes.

"If you have time, we can compete to see who the best mountaineer is!"

He also puts his trust in Chinese medicine. "I never take any western medicine. Chinese medicine, whether herbal or acupuncture, does not have any chemical effects."

Ambassador Rogachev says Russia and China have much in common, such as their warmhearted and hospitable people who cherish friendship. "In Russia, we like to invite guests and entertain them. Both Russians and Chinese like food. We like eating all the delicious food."

He also emphasizes that family ties are very important to Russian people, just as they are to the Chinese people. However, he regrets that he could not spend the Spring Festival with all his family members, a traditional Chinese holiday for family reunion. "I have to work! But I do take this opportunity to wish happiness to my family and all the Chinese people!"

By Su Wei



Rafet Akgunay
Turkey

Smiling Chinese Culture Fan Greets Chinese

Dr. Rafet Akgunay, ambassador of the Republic of Turkey, is a sunny and humorous gentleman.

The furniture and decorations in his office seem to be a world of culture; the long table, brought from Turkey, is made of Chinese wood. An antique cupboard decorated with Chinese figures, also comes from Turkey.

On his plans for Spring Festival, he said he would attend some official activities, including a party given by the All China Journalist's Federation.

"I will stay here in Beijing with my wife and 13-year-old son as I want to feel the feeling of Beijingers. Actually, I prefer to celebrate and enjoy with the crowds in the street, as part of the society," he said. "I only hope the weather allows us to enjoy it," he joked.

"We have similar spring festivals in Turkey called 'Hidrellez' which is on May 6 and 'Nevruz' on May 21. On those days, people go to parks and enjoy themselves with friends," he said.

"There are about 100 Turkish people living in Beijing", he said, "and I wish them a happy Year of the Horse". Then he wrote down his greetings to them in both Turkish and English: "Bayraminiz kutlu olsun! (Happy Holidays!)"

He also wrote down his greetings to *Beijing Today* readers and all the Chinese people: "I wish a peaceful, prosperous and happy New Year to all!"

By Shan Jinliang



South Africa

Peace and Prosperity

Themba Mn Kubheka, ambassador of the Republic of South Africa emphasized peace and prosperity in his greeting to the Chinese people for the Spring Festival.

"One thing all people are really concerned about is peace. So we wish peace to all the people, people in Beijing particularly." He also emphasized that under globalization, another important thing is prosperity. "There are two key points – peace and prosperity."

On talking about the coming lunar year, the ambassador said, "We're told that the horse symbolizes passion, energy and so on. So we wish the Chinese people in general and Beijing in particular, a very happy new year."

Ambassador Kubheka hoped South Africa and China would see more international exchange. "I hope there can be more links between the Chinese people and our people, between Chinese youth and South African youth, especially."

This is the ambassador's first posting in Asia. His first impression about China is the enormous population. Looking out of his window he is sometimes amazed to see so many cars driving on the Second Ring Road. "How do you manage so many cars?" he asked.

By Zhu Lin



the USA

American Sees Change in China

The embassy of the United States is a hive of activity preparing for the forthcoming visit to China by President George W. Bush.

The US ambassador was unavailable for an interview on this occasion. However, he spoke to our reporters not long ago, and hopes to deliver his warmest greetings to people in Beijing for the Spring Festival.

Ambassador Clark T. Randt, Jr. told *Beijing Today* that when his old friend President George W. Bush nominated him for the post of ambassador five months ago, he felt it was a dream come true. The ambassador said he had never had so much fun or found work so interesting, and never got to meet so many interesting people as he had during the last five months.

"What impresses me most in China is the improvement in the living standards of Chinese people," said Ambassador Randt, who has lived and worked in Asia for more than 20 years and has been traveling regularly to China on business for more than 25 years.

Speaking about how to close the gaps in Sino-US relations, he suggested that the most important thing is mutual understanding.

"The biggest difference between China and the US is that we come from different cultures, different histories and different traditions. For a lot of things that might seem self-evident to an American, Chinese people would come to different conclusions about. So I think it's important for us to try to understand one another and try to minimize misunderstandings. Communications are important."

By Ivy Zhang / Li Sha / Tong Qing'an



Sweden

'Ganbei Pengyou' from Sweden

"This is my fifth Spring Festival in China – 1998, 1999, 2000, 2001 and 2002," counted Ambassador Kjell Annelling, as the interview began.

"In my impression, Spring Festival is a traditional national festival concerning everyone in the country. It's the time to meet your family members. It is also a good time to travel since almost everything is closed on the holidays."

"I'll travel to Thailand this Spring Festival. I know I won't miss the Spring Festival there, because there are so many Chinese living in Thailand.

"There are 500 or so Swedes currently in Beijing and 1,000 in the whole of China. I wish them all a happy Horse Year, and please enjoy the Spring Festival, just like our Swedish National Day on June 6.

"To Chinese people, I wish our relations will become closer and closer. I wish the Swedish football team and Chinese football team will meet in the finals of the 2002 World Cup," he said.

Like many other foreigners in China, the ambassador is very fond of Chinese cuisine. But more than that, he enjoys the atmosphere surrounding a typical Chinese meal.

"When talking about Spring Festival, never forget Chinese dishes, particularly the proactive atmosphere around the dining table. You can imagine, so many guests share the same dishes, full of cheers and 'ganbei'. Yes, I like to dine in such an atmosphere. We have a family style small restaurant in the embassy. All our staff can enjoy this atmosphere whenever they want."

By Zhao Hongyi



Yugoslavia

Poetry of Friendship

"The best and most human festival for me is the Chinese Spring Festival!" Writing these words, the 71-year-old ambassador of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia smiled happily.

Ambassador Djukic has witnessed the city's great changes and Beijing now is like his second hometown. In fact his son and daughter were both born in Beijing's Xiehe Hospital.

When asked if he is a hutong fan, the ambassador became even more animated, and reeled several typical hutong slang expressions, traditional greetings between old Beijingers. "I have lived in many Beijing hutongs, around Dongdan, Xisi and Dongjiaominxiang areas. "Hutong people are very friendly and open to each other."

During the interview, the ambassador found an article in the latest *Beijing Today* introducing the Tang Poet Li Bai. The ambassador recounted the legend of Li Bai's death: how one moonlit night Li Bai was sitting in a boat enjoying the beautiful tranquil moment. At last he wanted to embrace the moon's reflection, and threw himself into the river. "This is really a legend," he sighed.

"This year is the Year of the Horse, and I think Chinese people do have some similar qualities and values as the horse. Chinese and Yugoslavian people have all along kept a stable relationship, and I hope and am convinced that the two countries will have a prosperous new year," said the ambassador.

By Li Dan



Photos by Jackey / Lily / Chen Shuyi / Qu Liyan / Zhuang Jian



Adorn Yourself in Good Luck

By Faye

In Chinese traditional customs, when someone enters the year of their own animals' year, which is called Benmingnian (本命年) in Chinese, it is a necessity to prepare a red belt before the eve of Spring Festival and put it on at the very moment the Chinese New Year's bell rings.

In folk culture, Benmingnian is inauspicious and people believe that the good luck a red belt brings will be powerful enough to defeat the bad luck that Benmingnian causes. So comes the custom.

Now, the custom of wearing the red belt has developed into many different forms, what is the most popular presently is Ping'an Knots (平安结), made by red strings and being worn on the wrists. In the couple of days before Spring Festival, the red belts can easily be found in supermarkets, shopping centers or even little stalls by the roadside. People who were born in a horse year (1990, 1978, 1966, 1954, 1942, 1930, 1918, and 1906) now may have a chance to test the power of this red magic.

Windmills
Sing in the Spring Winds

By Shi Xinyu

Singing rapturously in the early spring wind, the windmill should be one of the brightest stars in Beijing's Spring Festival Temple Fair.

As a traditional Chinese folk toy, the windmill has become popular in north China for hundreds of years. In Beijing, "Windmill Zhengs" (风车郑) is a well-known traditional windmill-making family established in the 1870s.

"Each of those seemingly simple windmills is the fruit of painstaking effort," said Zheng Yucheng. This 55-year-old man is the third-generation inheritor of the Windmill Zhengs' craft.

the flag

the drums

the wheels

the frame

Every single-wheel windmill goes through 72 pure manual procedures before being accomplished, explains Zheng, and the frame, the drum and the wheel are the most important parts of a windmill.

The frame made from the stalk of Chinese sorghum requires hard physical labor. Every autumn, Zheng purchases around half a ton of raw stalks from Sanhe (三河), in Hebei Province. After drying them in the sun, Zheng peels off the remaining leaves and cleans and polishes the surface one after another by hand. Then the stalks are ready to be cut and folded into frames.

The drum of a windmill should sound clear and silvery, but its small size, about 0.5cm in height and 5 cm in diameter, makes this difficult

to achieve. This constitutes a challenge to the producer's techniques and experiences. In Zheng's family, his wife Xue Xiulian takes care of the drum manufacturing. When asked how she manages to get those mud-bodied and paper-covered drums sound so loud, Xue answered with a smile: "My husband and I have been making windmills for Spring Festival for more than 20 years, so I learnt the basics from the hundreds of thousands of drums I have made. And for me it's all in the hands."

The craft of making windmill wheels could be a patience killer for many people: dyeing thousands of pieces of Korean Paper (高丽纸), a kind of flexible and durable paper, into different colors, cutting them into 0.8cm X 10cm strips, threading every 8 paper strips through a 1.5cm long axle made from stalk of Chinese sorghum, then sticking each end of the strips to the rim of the wheel. In Zheng's family it is also Xue who takes charge of this job. "If I let Zheng do it, it would be a torture for him and a pity for the wheels," said Xue teasingly.

For Zheng Yucheng and Xue Xiulian, the coming 2002 Spring Festival Temple Fair will be the 18th one they attended since 1984 and they plan to build a giant windmill of 240 wheels at the gate of their stall this time. "The louder our windmill sings, the happier the New Year will be," said Zheng with a joyful smile on his face.



Zheng Yucheng Preparing a big windmill for selling in Temple Fairs held in Terrace of Earth

Photo by Cui Jun



Traditional style floral paper decoration: a horse in a Fu Character symbolizing a lucky horse year

What People Say When Meeting Friends during Spring Festival

- By Zhu Lin*
- 1.guo nian hao, chun jie kuai le** 过年好, 春节快乐!
Happy Spring Festival!
This is the most common greeting people say to each other.
 - 2.gei nin bai nian le** 给您拜年!
Spring Festival greetings to you!
This is the first greeting people say when they visit other people's homes.
 - 3.wan shi ru yi** 万事如意!
May all your wishes come true!
 - 4.ma nian ji xiang** 马年吉祥!
Good luck to the Year of Horse!

Fry up some Luck for the New Year

By Shi Xinyu

Niangao (年糕) has been a Spring Festival special food for hundreds of years in China. People believe eating Niangao at the beginning of a year brings good luck because its pronunciation is identical to (年高), which means this year will be better than last year.

The initiation of this custom in Beijing can be dated back to at least the early 17th century's Ming Dynasty. "Brief Introduction to Scenes and Customs in the Capital" (《帝京景物略》), an article written at that time, says that on every Lunar New Year's Day, people in Beijing eat cakes made from sticky millet and call it Niannian-gao. (正月元旦, 啖黍糕, 曰年年糕)

Fried Niangao (炸年糕) is still a requisite dish at many people's Spring Festival feasts. Besides the delicious taste and the auspicious name, people like to take its golden color as a good omen of fortune for the coming new year.

The way to cook fried Niangao is quite easy to learn. First cut the block of Niangao into 3cm X 5cm X 0.3cm slices. Then put the 4 or 5 slices into 200g of hot oil and lower the gas to middle heat. Keep turning the slices over once every half-minute and be careful to watch their color. When the slices become golden, take them out and put new slices in. Finally after sprinkling sugar on the fried slices, a dish whetting people's expectation for good luck and fortune is ready for serving.

①Cut into Slices

②Fry in Oil

③Sprinkle Sugar on

④Ready for Serving

Photos by Zhuang Jian



Writing Spring Couplets
Painted by Ma Haifang

Deck the Halls with Spring Couplets

By Jingo Chan

As Spring Festival draws closer, the Chinese place Spring Couplets called Chun Lian (春联) at the entrances of their homes and stick floral paper decorations (窗花) on the windows to welcome the coming New Year.

Chun Lian is a special type of Dui-lian (对联), or couplet, which is used only during the Chinese New Year as part of its celebration. It comprises a couplet written on vertical strips of red paper in the best calligraphy style one can muster. The first (upper) line is posted on the right side of the front door. The second (lower) line is posted on the left side of the front door. In addition, a third horizontal piece may be posted across the top of the door. The contents of Chun Lian are usually some happy, hopeful, uplifting message for a better New Year.

Floral window decoration is a kind of Chinese paper-cut, an ancient folk art that can be dated back to the 6th century. The fauna, the flora, the figurines as well as a series of theatrical tales all contend for the themes of floral window decorations. Also it is common to see Chinese characters such as "prosperity". Whatever the design, the meaning is usually symbolic, and they are as such considered auspicious. It is therefore common for red paper to be used, since red is the most auspicious color in China.

Now it is hard to find hand-written Chun Lian and hand-made floral window decorations on the market. So, you either have to take up a brush yourself, or be content with the machine made products on the market.



Narcissus sold in markets

Photo by Zhuang Jian

Brighten up Winter
With a Narcissus

By Zhu Lin

As nature withdraws and the winds howl through the empty trees, a potted narcissus will bring warmth and hope to your home. The elegant snowy petals and charming, subtle fragrance of the narcissus have endured the plant to the Chinese as a winter tonic ever since the Song dynasty, which explains why it has become the symbolic plant of Spring Festival.

Plant the bulbs three weeks before Spring Festival so you can celebrate the New Year with the flowers in full bloom. Beijing's bitter winter cold means the narcissus takes between 30 to 35 days to blossom, enjoying two weeks of bloom.

Florists usually start to sell narcissus bulbs one month before Spring Festival. The plants are the easiest to grow indoors and the quickest to bloom. They can be planted in soil or sand, but the most popular and simple way in China is water planting. Any kind of pot can be used, although the most common material is porcelain.

As you remove dirt from the root of the bulbs, take care not to damage them. Tuck them into pebbles for support and keep the level of water just below the bases of the bulbs. Do not plant outdoors since the bulbs are tender and quickly injured by frost.

Initially place the pot in a window with a southern exposure so that it can get enough sunshine and ventilation. Change the water everyday, and place the pot in the coolest place of your house during the night. "It's better to pour out the water during the night and refill it every morning," said Liu Lan, an experienced narcissus planter. When the plants begin to flower, remove them from direct sunlight and still place them in the coolest area. This helps to prolong the flowering of the plants.

No fertilization is required.



Cook Your Way through Spring Festival

Nowadays in Beijing, more and more families prefer to dine out during various national and international festivals because the city now offers so much choice that is affordable—cuisines from the world over, including delectable regional offerings from all over China as well as Asia generally. While it comes to actually celebrate Spring Festival, people tend to stick to the traditional fare, like Jiaozi (饺子).

The numerous customs surrounding these foods are strictly followed by elderly Beijingers, who nostalgically pass those legends and stories of the festival and its special foods to the younger generations.



Directions:

Step One: You can combine your favorite vegetable and meat for the stuffing, such as fennel and pork or tomato and egg. Clean the vegetable and dice into small pieces. Place these in a piece of clean cloth and drain excessive juice. Mince the meat before mixing. Put the mixture into a large bowl. Add salt, gourmet powder, sesame oil and chicken stock. Mix together.

Step Two: Mix flour with egg white and water. Prepare the dumpling wrappers. Shape the dough into small balls. Flatten these with your palm. Use rolling pin to create even, circular wrappers.



Step Three: Use your hands to stuff the dumpling wrappers. Spread the wrapper on your left palm. Put a spoonful of stuffing into the wrapper. Fold the wrapper and secure edges with fingers to prevent spillage during cooking.

Step Four: Boil some water. When bubbling, put in dumplings and stir, ensuring they do not stick together. The dumplings are ready when the water re-boils and again bubbles. Add some cold water as soon as the water begins to boil. When the water boils again, the dumplings are ready.

Photos by Zhuang Jian

Jiaozi: The Food of Family Reunion

By Zhao Pu

No Chinese food beats Jiaozi (dumplings) in popularity during the Spring Festival. Traditionally on Spring Festival's Eve, families get together to enjoy this dish, which has always been representative of family reunion.

Jiaozi draws people together while being prepared, it's a shared duty that boosts the festive atmosphere. If you visit a Chinese family on lunar New Year's eve, you will find the whole household enjoying themselves making dumplings, usually in a spirit of great humor.

Probably the fun of eating Jiaozi lies not only in the delicacy itself but also in the process of preparing it: everybody, hosts and guests alike, rolls up his or her sleeves and wraps the pastry around the filling.

History of Jiaozi

The history of Jiaozi dates back over 1,700 years to ancient times. But the custom of making Jiaozi a special dish during the Spring Festival, or the Chinese lunar New Year, started in the Ming Dynasty (1368-1644), some 500 to 600 years ago.

Dumplings for this occasion are shaped like gold ingots and called Jiaozi, a word resembling the name of China's earliest paper money. Thus dumplings became a symbol of fortune. As the Spring Festival marks the start of a new year in the Chinese lunar calendar, people choose to eat Jiaozi to convey their wishes for a prosperous and good-fortune year.

Jiaozi customs

As China is a vast country, great regional differences exist in ways of making Jiaozi or even serving them.

There is no set rule as to what goes into the dumpling. Fillings can be anything from vegetables, meat to seafood, and even herbal medicines. Whereas for New Year dumplings in north China, stuffing had to consist only of vegetables, no meat. This, it was believed, brought peace and harmony in the New Year. Only after the fifth day of Spring Festival could people eat meat-stuffed dumplings. This day brought forth the saying "Breaking Fifth (破五)", meaning that all the rules and taboos about food could be broken. Whatever the fillings, the wrapping still had to be exquisite to make the Jiaozi look attractive.



Grab Yourself a Crab And Tuck in

By Xiao Xia

The Chinese love their traditions, and the tradition of eating crabs is no different. The four seasons offer a bounty of different crabs, all delicious. The coming Spring Festival is a good time to eat crabs, especially the male of the species.

The Chinese believe Mid Autumn Day is the time to eat female crab, while it is at the spring festival the male crab becomes the strongest for the coming spring mating. Xingcheng of Liaoning, Laizhou of Shandong and Wuchuan of Guangdong province produce the best male crabs.

Whether steamed or stewed with bean curd, the crab meat tastes simply divine.



Photo by Zhuang Jian

Laba Garlic & Vinegar: Balance the Accounts By the End of the Year

By Duoduo

Those Beijing residents who grew up in Hutongs preserve a warm memory of Laba garlic and vinegar deep in their minds, as a signal of the countdown for the lunar New Year.

Laba literally means the eighth day of the last lunar month and was traditionally regarded as the beginning of the preparation for the Spring Festival. Besides the famous Laba porridge, people make Laba garlic and Laba vinegar on this day. Usually, people put garlic into a jar of rice vinegar and seal it on that day. The jar will be opened on the Spring Festival eve, and the Laba garlic and vinegar are used as condiments for Jiaozi.

On the day of Laba, renters used to do their accounts and pester the debtor for payments in old times. The word "Accounts" shares the same pronunciation as garlic in Chinese, thus Laba garlic was invented to remind both the renter and the debtor of their unbalanced accounts by the end of the year.

Ingredients: 500g vinegar; 75-100g sugar garlic

Directions: Mix the vinegar with the sugar in a jar, put the peeled garlic into the jar. Seal the jar and open it some 20 days later, wait till the color of the garlic turns green.

Yuanxiao: Lantern Festival Special

By Zhao Pu

Celebration of the Chinese lunar New Year lasts till the Lantern Festival or Yuanxiao Festival, which falls on the 15th day of the first lunar month. Apart from hanging colorful lanterns and solving the puzzles on the lanterns, eating Yuanxiao (glutinous rice ball) is a major tradition at this festival.

Yuanxiao, eaten in this festival as a festive food, symbolizes the reunion of family and embodies people's longing for a prosperous future. In the south, Yuanxiao is called Tangyuan, Yuanzi or Shuiyuan. It is made of glutinous rice flour and stuffed with various fillings. It can be boiled, fried, or steamed.

The fillings inside the dumplings or Yuanxiao are either sweet or salty. Sweet fillings are made of sugar, walnuts, sesame, rose petals, sweetened tangerine peel, bean paste, or jujube paste. A single ingredient or any combination can be used as the filling. The salty variety is filled with minced meat, vegetables or a mixture.

Ingredients:

Sticky rice flour (糯米粉) 4 1/2 cups (500g); Butter 70 oz (200g); Black sesame powder (黑芝麻糊) 7 oz (200g); Sugar 8 oz (250g)

Directions:

1. Mix the butter with sesame powder, sugar, and wine together in a frying pan. Heat gently



Photo by Zhuang Jian

for a couple of minutes. Make small balls about 0.3 - 0.4 oz (10g) each.

2. Take 1/2 cup of sticky rice flour. Add water into the flour and make flattened dough. Cook it in boiled water and remove when done. Let it cool down. Then put it in the rest of the sticky rice flour. Add water and knead until the dough is smooth.

3. Make the dough into small pieces about 0.3-0.4 oz (10g) each. Make it like a ball using your hands first and then make a hole in the ball like a snail. Put the sesame ball into it and close it up.

4. Cook them in boiled water. Make sure to keep stirring in one direction while cooking. When they float on the water, continue to boil for about one minute on a lower heat.

Spring Roll: Salutes the Spring Solstice

By Duoduo

Spring roll is a special food for the Spring Solstice, one of the 24 solar terms in the Chinese lunar calendar that falls close to Spring Festival.

It was recorded that spring rolls were eaten in ancient times in welcoming the spring and invoking an abundant harvest of silkworms on the day of the Spring Solstice. The spring roll is shaped like a spring cocoon, with vegetable and meat fillings wrapped in a dough pancake.

Ingredients:

1 cup rice flour; 4 tablespoons regular white flour; 1/2 teaspoon salt; 4 large eggs; 1 teaspoon cooking oil; 2 cups fresh water

Directions:

1. Sift all the dry ingredients together twice.
2. In a separate bowl, mix the eggs, oil and water. Then pour this mixture into the dry ingredients to form a batter. Mix thoroughly to get all the lumps out.



Photo by Zhuang Jian

it to cook the other side and it should not brown. Take it out of the pan when it looks like it has set.

6. Repeat till all batter is used. Makes about 20 wrappers.

Spring Festival Recommendations

Great Wall Sheraton Hotel Beijing 长城饭店
6590 5566 ext. 2132

Join the hotel's Third Spring Festival's Eve Party on 11 February from 6:30pm to celebrate the festival in traditional Beijing style! Indulge in the bountiful Beijing snacks in the Grand Ballroom, which has been decorated as a Beijing street in the 19th century. Discover the magic of Qigong, acrobatics...

Add: No. 10 East Third Ring Road Beilu, Chaoyang District 朝阳区东三环北路10号

Grand Hyatt Beijing

君悦饭店
8518 1234 ext. 6362

Celebrate the Year of the Horse in the newly opened Grand Hyatt Beijing. Contact the hotel to design your own menu for the Spring Festival banquet. Traditional festive pastries and sweets arranged in sumptuous silk hamper boxes can be ordered for a modern presentation of nostalgia for the old days.

Add: Beijing Oriental Plaza, No. 1 East Chang An Avenue 东长安街1号东方广场

Shangri-La Hotel Beijing 香格里拉饭店

68412211 ext. 2777

Enjoy a heart-warming hot pot with fresh seafood, herbs and seasonal vegetables and forget the cold winter. Celebrate this festive season with your family and friends at the Shang Palace Restaurant. Take traditional Chinese Hampers and Nian Gao (New Year cake) back home for good luck.

Add: No. 29 Zizhuyuan Road, Haidian District 海淀区紫竹院路29号

China World Hotel Beijing

中国大饭店
6505 2277 ext. 34

Start the New Year with the perfect spring dinner at the Oriental Restaurant! Choose your own theme from among our set of menus, and do not forget to invite your family, friends and colleagues!

Add: No. 1 Jian Guo Men Wai Avenue 建国门外大街1号

Jianguo Hotel 建国饭店

6500 2233 ext. 8041

Are you secretly harboring a desire to show off your Chinese cookery talent? Call the Four Seasons Restaurant at Jianguo Hotel and ask them to prepare the ingredients for you, and book the time for your family banquet. The kitchen of the restaurant welcomes you to cook your favorite dishes or dumplings by yourself. Give your family a festive surprise!

Add: No. 5 Jianwai Dajie, Chaoyang District 建外大街5号

Tianjin Bai Jiao Yuan Chain Restaurants Beijing Branch 天津百饺园北京西城店

6605 9371 / 6605 9372

Want to skip the complicated process of making Jiaozi? Visit the Jiaozi specialty restaurant from Tianjin that won a Guinness World Record Award with its 229 kinds of dumplings. The restaurant keeps a custom that guests take their leftover dumplings away for good luck.

Add: No. Jia 12 New Cultural Street, Xicheng District 西城区新文化街甲12号

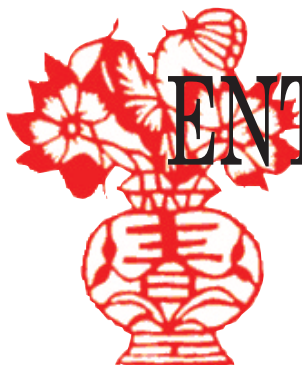
A Wen Shanghai Cuisine Restaurant 阿文上海菜馆

6502 1109 / 6567 6283

Over 30 kinds of traditional festive snacks with punchy Shanghai flavor are on offer for the Spring Festival feast, in addition to the exquisite Shanghai dishes. The restaurant displays the owner's collection of dozens of old photos, depicting the history of Shanghai in the past century.

Add: 2# Guanghualu Dongli, Chaoyang District 朝阳区光华路东里2号楼





All China Poised to Tune into Spring Festival Celebration

The 2002 Spring Festival Celebration Party will be shown on CCTV, Channel One on February 11, when the Chinese people get together to enjoy their most important festival. Being the chief entertainment during the last night of the old lunar year, watching the spring festival celebration party on TV with family



Photo by Cui Jun

members has been part of Chinese culture for 20 years. The Spring Festival Celebration Party was first broadcast on TV in 1983. Ever since then, it has become a custom to hold it every year. Interesting program includes Xue Cun, the songwriter's new piece "Being away from Home", the Para Para dance led by Kelly Chen. Old faces will appear at the party, mostly for cross talk (xiangsheng) and comedy. Stars in cross talk like Hou Yüwen, Huang Hong and Gong Hanlin will show "Talking about Horses in the Year of the Horse" and 'Flower Basin', telling jokes in the most authentic way of Chinese humor. When nearly one fifth of the world's population is watching the same TV program at the same time, it's really a miracle.



Adults Revive Childhood Dreams in Harry Potter

Harry Potter has made it down the Silk Road and over the Great Wall to Beijing cinemas last month. The kids are raving about the movie of course, but the adults are no less enthralled by the magic and fantasy.

Nourishing a hidden wish to make up for the fun they missed out on, the adults are enjoying the film together with the children.



Feast of Beijing Opera

There will be Beijing Opera performances every evening at the People's Theatre from February 12 to 18. The performance troupe is China National Beijing Opera Theatre.

Tapping Out an Irish Tempo

Rhythm of the Dance, the Irish tap dance company will show how dancers can shake the world stage with their passionate routines on February 13 and 14 at the Tianqiao Theater. The company coming to Beijing is composed of 28 dancers, 4 musicians and 2 singers. The two-hour show is full of traditional Irish music and advanced sound and visual effects. The legends of the Celtic history will come alive in their keen and sensual tempo.



Images of Chinese Contradictions

Some of the many contradictions in the Chinese character have been captured on film at Family Register, a photography exhibition at the Court Yard Gallery that will open till March 3rd. 103 relatives of Shao Yinong, one of the artists of the exhibition, feature in one large photo. The calligraphy tells the name of the person, and below is his or her relationship to Shao. The most noticeable thing about the photo is that the people at the top are all in revolutionary Sun Yat-sen clothing, the most common Chinese dress in the '60s and '70s. Below these the people dress in pants, skirts and shoes of the '90s.



Photo by Zhuang Jian

"Different people wear different clothing below, and that shows the humanity of individuals controlled by the power above," said Mu Chen, Shao's wife who cooperated with her husband in creating Family Register. Shao Yinong and Muchen spent three months looking for all the relatives and taking pictures of them in Zhejiang Province, where most of the family members live currently. During the process they strongly felt the importance of family rooted in the Chinese mind.

Witness the Destruction of Beauty

Love and Hate in Yuanmingyuan', the modern dance drama to be staged from February 12 to 17 at the Poly Theatre treats such tragic subject matter that only great drama can ensue. "That period of history is so sad and full of memories! Once the choreographer grasps the event, he grasps the audiences' heart," said Ou Jianping, a dance critic. In the dance drama, the hero Stone, a stonemason, falls in love with Jade, a maid in Yuanmingyuan, also known as the Old Summer Palace. But Jade is forced to marry The Eunuch. When the Anglo-French forces invaded Beijing in 1860, they completely destroyed Yuanmingyuan, the grandest imperial palace at that time. Then everything changed. Jade and Stone's tragedy is drawn into the tragedy of the palace. This is how beauty is destroyed, beauty of humanity and of national spirit. The composer of the dance drama is Zhao Jiping, a famous composer best known for his film music in Raise the Red Lantern and Farewell, My Concubine. There are altogether 111 dancers with an average age of 18 in the performance.



Photo by Cui Jun

美食 · 娱乐 · 休闲
TEL: 68997124 68311626

ZiyiXuan Baochi Lou
紫怡轩鲍翅楼

3rd Floor Building B,
Donghuan Guangchang,
29 Dongzhong jie,
Dongcheng District
东城区东中街 29 号东环广场 B 幢 3 层
11:00-14:30, 17:00-22:00
6856.9388

Beijing Roast Duck
北京烤鸭店

Building 3, Tuanjie Lake, Chaoyang District
朝阳区团结湖北口 3 号楼
11:40-14:00, 17:00-21:30
6852.4003

Bianyifang Roast Duck Restaurant
便宜坊

2A Chongwenmenwai Dajie, Chongwen District
崇文区崇文门大街甲 2 号
11:00-14:00, 17:00-21:30
Tel: 6712.0505

Spice Orchids Thai Restaurant

Welcome to our Spice Orchids Thai Restaurant.
Our features are undeniable: Walls decorated in purple and deep wine red; colors that really work together to produce a harmony; food that lie on in its contrasts; chefs that create a wonderful medley of hot, cool, sour, sweet, crunchy and soft dishes. Fish cake, deep-fried Taro, Green Pepper & Red Curry Fried with Beef and Minced meat fried with Basil leaves are not to be missed. And, we have an unique Chinese name, Tai Xiang La, which means Spicy Thai Restaurant, verbally; and Very Good Smell, phonetically. You're likely to satisfy your taste buds for a mere of RMB18 up, with weekday set lunch from RMB25-50. Tasty and inexpensive. A very good casual dining experience. Add: 8 South Street, Guan Dong Dian, Chaoyang District. (North of Kerry Centre Hotel and the back of Hot-Point Disco) Tel: 6591.7726 Fax: 6591.7926

CLUB GREEN
BEST CLUB IN BEIJING
ADD: Land mark Tower 1/F 8North Dong San Huan Road. chaoyang District Beijing
地址: 北京市朝阳区东三环北路 8 号亮马河大厦一层
TEL: (010)65906999 65906688 — 2988
COME & BE AS COOL AS — — GREEN



New French Restaurant Now Open!

来过罗兰·加洛斯吗? 不知你有没有来过罗兰·加洛斯, 有没有尝过这里鲜嫩的蜗牛, 有没有就着奶酪品味波尔多的葡萄酒, 有没有燃着古巴雪茄欣赏网球公开赛? 侍者是彬彬有礼的, 还能把每款酒, 每种烟的来由娓娓道出。氛围是典雅的, 还有温暖浪漫的烛光。这里还有独具特色的网球文化主题服务: 专门从海外订购的网球历史文化资料, 精彩纷呈的网球主题活动和球友内部通讯, 主题网站与“一网打尽”网球网络联盟。Spoil yourself with genuine French fare and ambiance and a superb vairyety of wines at the Roland Garros restaurant. Close a full evening of relaxation with a choice of dramatic desserts, coffees, and Cuban cigars.
罗兰·加洛斯网球主题法式餐厅
Roland Garros Restaurant
Open: 11:00-24:00 Daily
地址: 朝阳区农展南路朝阳网球俱乐部北门一层
Address: North Entrance Chaoyang Tennis Club
Nongzhan Nanlu, Chaoyang District
Telephone: 6508-9100

北京之夜酒楼
Night of Beijing Restaurant

Special offer of seafood as well as many other dishes and salads: shrimp: RMB38; lobster / clam: RMB98
Pleasant ambience and sufficient parking space.
Address: 1 Dayabao Alley, Dongcheng District
Tel: 65272672, 65272704 ext 8865
粤菜 中华餐 商务套餐
特价海鲜: 基围虾 38 元 龙虾/象拔蚌 98 元
数十款 10 元菜及特价菜: 多款夏日清爽沙拉。
本酒楼内设多间文化厅房, 环境优雅, 备有充足车位。
地址: 东城区大雅宝胡同 1 号 电话: 65272672 65272704 转 8865

北京好世界阳光酒店
BEIJING FANTASY WORLD CLUB

It offers a full range of services, including fine rooms, restaurants and entertainment centre.
FU LIN Seafood Restaurant: more than 100 kinds of fresh seafood are now 20% off.
Korean Flavour Restaurant: newly open, supply Korean food and barbecue. 20% off.
Entertainment Centre: Bowling, billiards, karaoke and gynimasium.
Tel: (010)68843388-718/620
Add: 1 Gu Cheng Nan Lu Shijingshan District (100 meters in west from Gu Cheng metro station)
电话: (010)68843388-718/620 (详见店内海报)
地址: 石景山区古城南路 1 号 (地铁古城站西 100 米)

Donglaishun Restaurant
东来顺

5/F, Xindong'an Plaza, Wangfujing
Da jie, Dongcheng District
东城区王府井大街 新东安商场 5 层
11:00-14:00, 17:00-21:30
6528.0932

Fan Shi Gang
饭是钢

140 Andingdajie, Dongcheng District
东城区安定大街 140 号
9:00-23:00
64042187



Touch the Stone Monkey

By Jiao Pei

Many temples host fairs during Spring Festival. Among those, the Baiyunguan Temple Fair has the longest history and is the most popular.

Touching the Stone Monkey is the best known game at Baiyunguan Temple. There are three stone monkey sculptures; a six centimeter one above the front gate, one at the screen wall on the west side of the gate, and one on the base of the stone tablet in front of the main hall in the east yard behind the temple.

Touching the Stone Monkey mainly means touching the one on the front gate. It is said that doing so can prevent one from falling ill and ward off evil. Having been touched by so many people, this stone monkey is almost flat.

As well as Touching the Stone Monkey and various other games and religious activities, there are markets for small goods inside and outside all the temples.

Temple fairs are an important part of traditional Beijing life. Following is a list of the temple fairs held in and around Beijing, at which you can experience the festival atmosphere close up.

Changdian (厂甸) Spring Festival Temple Fair

Special activities: Sightseeing, shopping, performances, flower parade, arts and crafts show and games.

Where: Between Nanxinhuajie and Dong and Xi Liulichang.

When: Feb. 12-17.

Tel: 83155853.

Ditan Cultural Temple Fair

Special activities: Performance of offering a sacrifice to the earth, Beijing folk customs performance, comprehensive theatrical items, large-scale ice lantern exhibition.

Where: Ditan (地坛) Park, bus 18, 108, 113, or subway to Andingmen or Yonghegong, or bus 13, 106 to Ditan Nanmen (south gate).

When: Feb. 10-18

Tel: 64216870, 64214657.

Welcome the Spring - International Folk Customs Festival

Special activities: Altogether seven parts, including exhibition area; pictures, sculptures, installation art and paintings to present the German Cologne Carnival, New Orleans Mardi Gras Carnival and Italian Venice Carnival; performance area, bands, Salsa Cabana from Kempinski Hotel, De Junge from Colongne and singer Maria, The Rhythm Dogs from Big Easy; F&B area, featuring food from many popular restaurants and bars, tourism area, where some airlines and travel agencies will provide travel consulting services, and much more!

Where: Chaoyang Park (朝阳公园), Chaoyang District.

When: Feb. 12-18.

Hongluo Temple Folk Fair

Special activities: flower fair; traditional snacks; ring the bell; appreciate the bamboo, pine tree and plum; calligraphy and paintings exhibition; traditional opera;



lucky blessings for the New Year.

Where: Hongluo (红螺) Temple, bus 916, 936 from Dongzhimen to Huairou County, then take a taxi (10 yuan)

When: Feb. 12-18.

Admission: 30 yuan.

Tel: 60681636.

Dongyue Temple Cultural Fair

Special activities: Folk custom and art performance to show the deep culture of Dongyue Temple.

Where: Dongyue (东岳) Temple, 141 Chaowai Dajie, opposite Landao shopping center, bus 109, 101,

112, 846 to Shenlujie (神路街).

When: Feb. 12-18.

Admission: 10 yuan.

Tel: 65510151.

Baiyunguan Temple Folk Custom Fair

Special activities: Folk custom performance, local delicacies, Taoist cultural courses, Touch the Stone Monkey and Strike the Money Hole.

Where: Baiyunguan (白云观) Temple

When: Feb. 12-17.

Admission: 10 yuan.

Tel: 63443666.

Daguan yuan Red Mansion Temple Fair

Special activities: Arts and crafts market, local products, snacks, theatrical items, ancient

costume parade of the Imperial Concubine Yuan, flower fair, performance on ice, and book market.

Where: inside and outside Daguan yuan (大观园), bus 19, 61, 351, 816 to Daguan yuan.

When: Feb. 12-17.

Admission: 8 yuan.

Tel: 63544994, 63542299-506.

The 19th Longtanhu Temple Fair

Special activities: Folk flower fair, folk custom entertainments, general merchandise and snacks, martial arts performance and more.

Where: Longtan (龙潭) Park, bus 6, 60, 12, 958.

When: Feb. 9-17.

Admission: 6 yuan.

Tel: 67144336.



Touching the stone monkey

Starting the Year with a Bang

By Jiang Zhong

According to lunar calendar, Spring Festival raises the curtain of the New Year. Setting off fireworks is the most important part of the celebration. The origin of this custom can be traced back to the early Tang Dynasty, when a plague had spread across the kingdom. A man named Li Tian filled a bamboo tube with gunpowder and ignited it. The noise of the resulting explosion was believed to have frightened away the devil that caused the pestilence and set the people free from their suffering. Whether or not Li Tian's proto firecracker was responsible for ending the plague, the coincidence was enough to create a connection between fireworks and the driving out of evil that has lasted until modern times. From that time on fireworks have been used at all important ceremonies and festivals. Although fireworks are banned in downtown Beijing, in the suburbs the old custom is alive and well. There are many places just a short drive away where you can combine a bit of sightseeing with the fun of fireworks.

Ancient Temple Folk Custom Tour in Mentougou

When: Jan. 26-Mar. 15.

Where: Various scenic spots in Mentougou District

What: Visit ancient temples; pray to Buddha with the "morning bell and evening drum"; enjoy the fireworks and festive dinner on the lunar New Year Eve.

Getting there: Bus 931 from Pingguoyuan Subway Station to Tanzhe Temple and Jietai Temple.

Contact: 60862244, 69802232, 61882936

Great Wall and Skating Folk Festival Tour in Huairou

When: Feb. 12- 16.

Where: Mutianyu (慕田峪) Great Wall, Hongluo Temple and other scenic spots in Huairou County

What: Visit the Mutianyu Great Wall; worship Buddha at the Hongluo Temple; ice-skate at Jiugukou; participate in festive activities and banquet at Shentangyu.

Getting there: Bus 916 or 936 from Dongzhimen to Huairou County, then mini-bus to the scenic spots.

Contact: 69659647, 69646250

Spring Festival Celebration at Shidu

When: Feb. 11- 26.

Where: Shidu (十渡) Scenic Spot

What: Tour Shidu Scenic Spot; stay with a peasant family.

Getting there: Bus 917 from Tianqiao to Shidu; train 7,8 from Beijing South Railway Station to Shidu.

Contact: 61340520, 61340085

Spring Festival Celebration at Cangmi Ancient Road

When: Throughout the Spring Festival

Where: Folklore Village at Cangmi (仓米) Ancient Road, Yanqing County

What: Set off fireworks, learn to write Spring Festival couplets; try local foods with a local family

Getting there: bus 919 from Deshengmen to Yanqing, then bus to the ancient road

Contact: 69182717

Celebration in ancient military camp

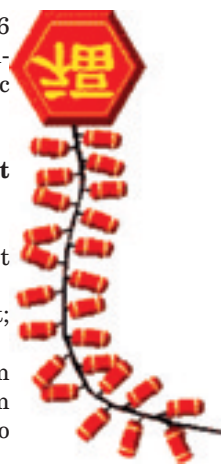
When: Jan. 1-Mar. 5.

Where: Yaoqiaoyu Folklore Village, Miyun County

What: Live in the ancient castle; set off fireworks; make bean curd; decorate the local homes according to Ming Dynasty custom; extend Spring Festival greetings to local families door to door.

Getting there: Bus from Dongzhimen to Miyun County, then bus to Yaoqiaoyu Village, Xinchengzixiang

Contact: 81022928



Temple fair in old Beijing



愿我们诚实守信精益求精的“美奥人”为您营造出清新美好的生活空间。装备精良的专业进口设备，高水平、规范化的优质服务队伍

家居保洁

家庭开荒：新居入住前的清理、除垢、灭菌、清洗及去污。

家庭定期、不定期除尘除垢、去污、清斑迹、厨房、卫生间及各种地面的养护、打蜡、翻新。

商业保洁

面向机关、饭店、写字楼、商厦、医疗机构、社区、超市等大型物业，提供长期、定期的保洁

清洗服务。

地毯清洗

各种地毯的清洗去斑及养护

Wish we were honest and faithful. Meiao man seeking for greater perfection gives you delightfully fresh living space.

Professional import facilities with excellent kit, high quality service staffs with high level and standardization.

House keeping:

Cleaning defecating sterilizing for new residence.

Floor maintaining, face-lifting polishing in kitchen and toilet.

Commercial preserves:

Service for offices, hotels, business buildings, hospitals communities, super markets, etc.

Carpet cleaning:

Cleaning and maintenance for all kinds of carpet.

美奥保洁

营造现代人的清新生活空间





Chenghuang Temple Fair in Shanghai

An important Spring Festival tradition in Shanghai is visiting the Cheng Huang Miao (Temple to the Town Gods), as there is a temple fair there every year. Cheng Huang Miao is only a short distance from Yu Yuan, the Mandarin's Garden. At one time every city and large town possessed a temple to the town gods, but few still stand. In the past, people gathered at Cheng Huang Miao, Tudi Miao (The Temple of the God of the Earth) and Wen Miao (the Confucian Temple) to enjoy various Spring Festival activities. At Cheng Huang Miao, entrance is free to everybody on the first and middle days of each month. Today these places still attract throngs of visitors during Chinese New Year.

Although Shanghai is one of China's most "westernized" cities, having opened to world trade more than 100 years ago, most Shanghainese remain passionately fond of traditional style snacks. These recipes have been passed down from generation to generation, especially Yuan Xiao (sweet dumplings made of glutinous rice flour), eaten at Lantern Festival, the last day of Spring Festival. Eating Yuan Xiao in the countryside means praying for a good harvest in the coming year, while for downtowners, it is more a nostalgic custom.

Flower Spring Festival in Guangzhou

Guangzhou is a city of flowers, and the annual Flower Fair held during Spring Festival has won worldwide renown. Before Spring Festival, flowers can be seen on every street and lane of the city, while every park and garden holds flower exhibitions, especially during the three days before New Year's Eve. At this time, flowers are all in the full bloom and brilliant as brocade, and thousands of people come out to admire and purchase them. Guangzhou's flower fair has a history of more than one hundred years. Peach blossom can be considered the "Christmas tree" in Guangzhou during Spring Festival and every household places a bunch of peach flowers in front of their gate. People in Guangzhou also like to decorate their houses with kumquats and narcissus during the holiday.

Lantern Festival in Fuzhou

On Lantern Festival, lantern shows and games of guessing riddles written on lanterns are the key activities. In the old days in Fuzhou, lantern shows started from the ninth day of the first month of the lunar year and after the thirteenth day, lanterns could be seen hanging on every house.

It's an old custom to give newly married women lanterns. Traditionally, newly married women and those who had given birth to a boy that year would dress in red and green, and led by their mother-in-law or other older women, would walk through the lantern shed saying auspicious words.

During the lantern show period, everywhere is bustling with activity, especially Nanhou and Ximen streets. Dragon lanterns are the most popular of the festival lanterns in Fuzhou.

Guessing riddles written on lanterns is also very popular. The riddles usually involved completing proverbs or sentences from old books, and guessing names of people, places, animals and plants.

Lantern Festival remains the most popular traditional folk festival in Fuzhou for people to express their best wishes for the coming year.

By Li Dan



Miao women invite you to toast the New Year with them

Celebrating Spring Around China

Zhuang Minority

Spring Festival is the most relaxing festival of the year. However, Zhuang Minority students should study a new book the first day of the Chinese New Year. This means they can improve in their study next year.

Wives would go to the river to bring fresh water for the festival. They would also scatter corn on the field for a bumper harvest next year. Visitors are warmly welcomed, and you can have dinner together and celebrate the coming of the Chinese New Year.

Where: Wuming, Long'an and Ningminglongzhou counties around Nanning city, Guangxi Province.
Train: T5. **Price:** 276 - 770 yuan.



Making up for the New Year

Jingpo Minority

Several days before the coming of the New Year, people of the Jingpo Minority are busy with the preparation of the celebration. They redecorate their houses, go hunting in the mountains and do some necessary shopping.

The young people are very happy during the festival as there are all sorts of competitions, such as singing and shooting. It is also the date for young people to choose their lovers. The winner of the competition is the most popular in the community.

Join their competition to see if you can rank among the Jingpo Minority.

Where: Jingpo Autonomous County, Yunnan Province.
Train: T61. **Price:** 320 - 890 yuan.

Lisu Minority

People of the Lisu Minority would spread the first cooked rice of the year under the fruit trees in their courtyard. This is the symbol of a bumper harvest next year. They also feed salt to their ox to thank them for the year's hard work.

During the Spring Festival, they hold a traditional poetry competition. In the competition, anyone can be invited to read poems or even sing a song. If you are interested, you will be welcome to participate.

Where: Lisu Autonomous County, Yunnan Province.
Train: T61. **Price:** 320 - 890 yuan.

Elunchun Minority

On New Year's eve, people kowtow to their ancestors and the elderly to show their respect. And they won't sleep that night, which is traditionally regarded as a way of ensuring inspiration the next year.

The horse race held during the festival is welcomed by all Elunchun people. Not only does the winner gain a prize, but the horse as well. The winner of the race should walk around the horse enclosure, with a birch box in his hands and wish the horse happy Spring Festival.

The horse race is a good opportunity for young men to show their courage to their beloved.

Where: Elunchun Autonomous county, Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region.
Train: K43. **Price:** 52 - 163 yuan.

Tibetan Minority

Tibetans dress very beautifully for the festival. Even grandparents wear bright colors. On the first day of the festival, people only celebrate at home. They drink and eat during the whole day, so it is not surprising to see people drunk even in the afternoon.

For the following days, people go out and celebrate the festival with friends. If you are not so good at drinking, you must be aware of their hospitality of inviting you to drink. However, it is really a good idea to get a little drunk during this festival.

Tibetan folk dances are all inspired from nature. The music lures you to dance and you have no choice but to get up and join in.

Where: Lhasa, Tibet Autonomous Region.
Flight: SZ4112, China South West Airlines.
Price: 2040 yuan.



Celebrating with guests Photos by photocomme.com

Miao Minority

Girls of the Miao Minority are very happy during the festival. After a year of hard working, they can dress in beautiful costumes to show off their beauty.

They have a big gathering on the first day of the New Year. The gathering is always started with three boys, who will present a farming play. One acts as an ox and two others as farmers. This is the symbol of a bumper harvest the next year.

If you like the idea of acting the part of a farmer (or an ox), you can give your best wishes to the people with your performance.

Where: Nanning city, Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region.
Train: T5. **Price:** 276 - 770yuan.

By Wang Dandan

旅游 · 度假 · 休闲
TEL: 68997124 68311626

pick up your Walnuts on the Xiangshuihu Great Wall

Great Wall, Ancient Mountain, Cleat Spring, Flying Waterfall. join us to the Xiangshuihu Great Wall, you will see all the above scenery. Xiangshuihu locates at the west part of Mutianyu Huairou. Besides the lots interesting place, it also has a folurish orchard with apple, date, pear, walnut, chestnut, grape, edible wild herbs.

From August 25 to October, Xiangshuihu will have a special activity "Visit Great Wall, pick Up Fruits".

Call now: 010-61631085 61632539 61631588

Take bus: No.916at Dongzhimen

Web site: www.Xiangshuihu.com

友谊宾馆康乐部

The Friendship Hotel Recreation Center

The outdoor swimming pool of the Friendship Hotel is one of the highest standard swimming pools of Beijing. The swimming pool is equipped with 7-meter diving platforms and delicate diving boards. The strict sterilization measures and the circulation system ensure the water is always clean. **Morning opening 6: 30-8: 30 RMB30/day, RMB400/month, and RMB1000/quarter.** Tel: 68499696



友谊宾馆室外泳池是北京国际高标准泳池, 配有7米的跳台和轻巧的跳板, 严格的消毒措施和水循环系统, 使其永远具有碧蓝的水质。早场: 6:00 - 8:30, 30元/天, 400元/月, 1000元/季度。咨询电话: 68499696

彼岸潜水俱乐部 欢迎您

The Other Side (Bi'an) Diving Club

The club provides the sports fans with professional service besides fun and coolness in the hot summer. Adopting sophisticated foreign training textbooks and equipment, the club provides professional training such as **the swimming and diving courses and organizes diving tours home and abroad.** With the internationally accepted training method, it takes the trainee only 20 hours to get the CMAS diving certificate which is acknowledged all over the world. The trainees have free and flexible choice as to the training time. The swimming course consists of elementary level, improving level, advanced level, honored guest class and the class paid by the hour. **Swimming and diving summer camp. Sign up now!**

Time for the opening of the courses: the early April. The trainee can begin the course on signing up at any time. The summer courses begin on 1 June. Course time: 9:00 - 20:00, 7 days a week. Time for signing up: 9:00 - 21:00, 7 days a week. Place for signing up: The Professional Club of the Friendship Hotel (No. 3, Baishiqiao Road, Haidian District, 200 meters south of Renmin University). Tel: 68713790 68713791 68498613 Telex: 68713790

Take buses no. 320, 804, 302 or Yuntong buses no. 104, 105, 205, 106 and get off at Shuang'an Shangchang stop. Or take bus no. 811 or Te 6 and get off at Renming Daxue stop.



北京彼岸潜水俱乐部是一家专门为体育爱好者提供专业服务的运动休闲俱乐部。在这炎热的夏季, 为您提供一些专业训练、度假服务。同时自然教练自我提升引进了先进的教材和教学设备, 开设了游泳和潜水班, 同时全年组织到全国各地和世界各埠进行潜水旅游。用真正与国际接轨的教学方法使学员在二十个小时的课程就可以获得国际通用的CMAS潜水证书, 您可以根据自己的空闲时间选择上课时间。游泳和潜水班分为初级、提高级、高级、荣誉级、付费班。**暑期开办游泳潜水夏令营, 即日起报名。** 开课时间: 4月初开始, 假期结束6月4日开完夏季班, 全大训练。 授课时间: 每日 9:00-20:00 (周六、日不休息)。 报名时间: 每日 9:00-21:00 (周末不休) 报名地点: 友谊宾馆专家俱乐部大厅 (海淀区白石桥路3号, 中国人民大学南 200 米) 报名电话: 68713790 68713791 68498613 传真: 68713790 乘车路线: 运通104、105、205、106、320路、804路、302路双安商场下车, 811、特6路人民大学下车



汇中颐园——距离城区最近的具有中国古典式建筑风格的商务会所, 位于东三环南端, 毗邻京瑞饭店、潘家园古玩城, 距离 CBD 驱车 10 分钟的路程, 它不仅拥有古色典雅的餐厅, 而且涵盖了六个风格各异、功能不同的四合院。

餐厅“养生堂”诚邀五星级饭店厨师加盟, 主理养生餐、新派粤菜。餐厅可同时容纳三百余人就餐。东西两侧十四间包房风格各异, 演出效果最佳的中央舞台巨大的京剧脸谱烘托出整个大厅浓郁的传统文氛围。与中央电视台合作为十一频道《戏迷俱乐部》栏目提供了录制场地。

汲雅斋为书画院, 由汇中颐园与中国书画家联谊会合办, 其既可以举行各种展览和笔会, 也可以供爱好者低价收藏名人字画及明清家具真品。

鼎盛阁, 其装饰以中国古文化为底蕴, 有记载中医学基础的《黄帝内经》, 也有《聊斋志异》中的《小翠》, 是商务会议及宴请的良好场所。

茗茶居为茶园, 其包房有皇家式、农家式、日式等不同风格。古玩、玉器、灶台、腊肉、点缀其间。置身于此, 品茗论道, 其乐无穷。

颐生堂汇中颐园与中国中医研究院合作的养生健康咨询中心, 有中医保健、药浴等服务项目, 同时为会员建立健康卡。

汇中颐园——都市中的世外桃源。全体员工真诚期待您的光临!

电话(TEL): 67320035, 67322002-209 传真(FAX): 67320017





For Singles

Love is Nothing to Do with Flowers

By Simple Fish

Women will always be happy to be surprised with roses sent on Feb. 14th, for behind each bunch there will be a melted heart waiting.

Every Valentine's Day I have received bunches of roses, ever since the first year of college. From low-quality roses arranged on the street to the latest and freshest by air-express, to the ones you see on the counters of shopping malls with perfumed fragrance, each one never lasting long in my memory.

Last year's Valentine's Day I prepared some chocolates to give the one who would send me roses. He is my colleague, working in the same office. It seemed both of us were just waiting for the moment to speak out our love. And this day offered us the perfect opportunity.

The first bunch of roses arrived at noon. They were from my dad, who thought I might feel lonely if I had not received any flowers during the day. He was right. Looking around the office, all the girls were holding or admiring floral declarations of love except me. Still he kept silent.

In the afternoon I received an-



other four bunches of roses. They were obviously the jokes of my male friends.

He sat there quietly. Knocking off time drew closer and closer, and I could feel my heart empty and shaking. I pretended to pack up my desk, but he still sat there working, motionless, it seemed to me.

Finally, I could wait no longer. I held all the roses I had received that day and with my head erect, stepped out of the office, and out of his view.

He married a gentle and soft girl during the following year. Once he told me that, on the Valentine's Day last year, he had finished drawing a very beautiful picture of a rose on his computer, and was waiting for the moment to send it to me. But, when I stood up to leave, he was overcome with worry and accidentally deleted the rose! A whole day's effort, waiting and hope disappeared just in a second...

I understand now Valentine's Day is just an ordinary day, nothing to do with love or flowers at all.

There were many beautiful flowers last year, and I missed the one that belonged to me.

A Single Girl's Impression

By Clara

I used to have the impression, from books, movies and friends, that western people all had girlfriends or boyfriends, even when they were in primary school. I didn't really understand that at the time. Why did they have to hang around in couples? Was it really so much fun? Having a boyfriend seemed more like a formality, a social requirement, rather than a need.

Valentine's Day appeared fake and vane to me. People all ate hamburgers, so McDonalds appeared. People all hung around in couples, so we got Valentine's Day.

When I started to pay attention to the couples getting together around me. I found two things. The first was that, as far as I could see, most couples didn't match each other in appearance. Either the boy was shorter than the girl, or the girl was plumper than the boy. Second, very pretty or elegant figures are often alone.

"People pair up simply to gain a psychological balance," I assured myself. I grew up in a family just like millions of other Chinese families. I never heard my parents saying, "I love you" or any such words to each other. Neither have I seen them show excitement when being together. If

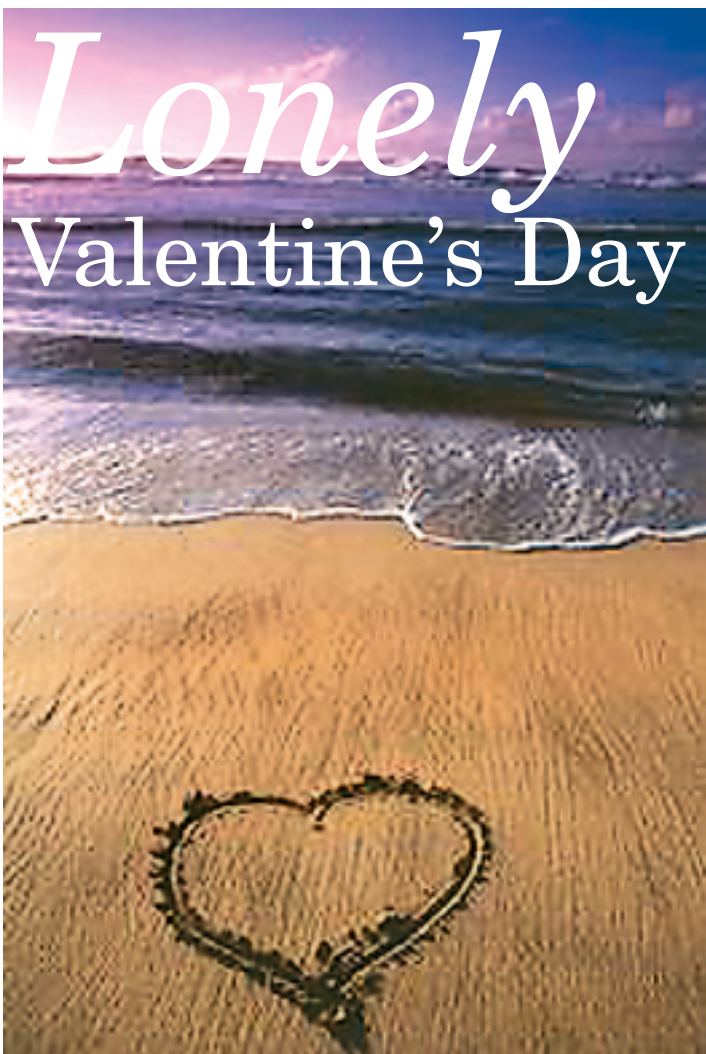


this is the normal life, then I should say I seldom have need of words like "passionate", "jolly", "enthusiastic" or "impressive" in normal life. It seems that my parents'

only common achievement and only common subject of conversation is me.

There are lots of love stories and romances in books and movies. But I have never met one in my own family. The beauty I find in music can never appear in real life, and I have doubts about which is the real "real" life - the one I'm living day in and day out, or the one in music? Should I believe in real life just because I can see it with my own eyes?

I believe I'm not the only girl thinking this way, but few are willing to speak out. Anyway, when Valentine's Day is coming, I still have expectations and wishes. When I see fashionable couples stick their lips together, I still feel sour inside. "A girl's youth is like milk," says one of my friends, "It can't keep long!" In his opinion, by not making a boyfriend, I'm wasting my youth. But it seems that once a girl starts going out with a boy and seriously thinking about starting a family, her youth is surrendered to the boy. Is it really worth it?



Classic Love Movies

Head into classic love stories to look for your ideal romance.

The Wedding Planner

She can turn any wedding into the perfect romantic event.

Bounce

When Buddy reveals that he once gave up his seat on a plane that later crashed, the two realize that they have a deeper connection.

Love and Basketball

It is the powerful story of two next-door neighbors in Los Angeles who grow up loving basketball and, eventually, each other.

Autumn in New York

He falls in love for the first time...she falls in love forever.

What Women Want

A Chicago advertising exec, Nick Marshall, gets a whole new outlook on life when a fluke accident gives him the ability to read women's minds.

In the Mood for Love

A journalist, moves into an apartment building occupied mainly by Shanghainese at the same



time as a secretary, while their spouses are away...

The Bridges of Madison County

The touching romance between a middle-aged, Italian-American housewife and a photographer from "National Geographic."

Chocolat

When a single mother and her six-year-old daughter move to rural France and open a chocolate shop - with Sunday hours - across the street from the local church, they are met with some skepticism.

It's our Valentine's Day, everybody's, couples', the elderly's and even singles. Thus, we provide you these four pages and hope from the bottom of our heart that you will really enjoy the romantic day.

Short Takes

By Li Dan

1. Till now I still remember clearly the scene of a young boy lying on the roof of his house, holding his favorite camera, aiming and shooting it at the sky. It was a movie about a love story between two high school students, recording their fresh and shy love, beautiful dreams and secret desires. After the young girl moved abroad with her family, it seemed the two had lost contact forever. Years later, when the now adult woman received a small package from far away, she burst into tears on opening it. In the package was nothing but pictures of the sky, reflecting different colors, sunny, cloudy, windy, overcast and rainy. On the back of each photo were the words, "These are the days I miss you dearly"... and I could imagine years ago, a young boy lying on the roof of his house, with his pure dream...

2. There was a boy who loved sounds. He enjoyed nothing more than listening to and collecting all kinds of sounds of nature with his little recorder. He used to put the recorder by the railway tracks, recording the sound of a train from far away. Once in his recorder he found the sweetest laugh in the world, and she came into his life. "Another kind of beautiful sound appears in my world." He made every effort to record the girl's speaking voice, laughter and even crying, playing it again and again when alone. Ask me now how they are? A very sweet couple.

3. We met online in August 2000 and fell in love in March 2001, although we are 2,850 kilometers apart. This Valentine's Day he said he's going to send me a thing he wears everyday, a wooden bracelet, and a video recording his living environment and his daily life. I was told I might cry when I heard the words he said to me in the video. Now, the greatest concern in my life is looking forward to my Valentine's Day gift from the south tropical islands.

4. He has a hobby, to watch cars' headlights running on the streets from the flyover in the late night. "The lights coming towards me stand for worries, and the lights running far away stand for hopes," he told himself. This Valentine's Day he plans to invite her to see the night city and car lights together. He'd like to share it with her, to share with her a lifelong dream. Will she come?



V's Day Tips

By Li Dan

Staying at Home - Choose some latest or classic music CDs, movies or novels, brew some tea or coffee, and let the day pass quickly, before you know it, but absolutely joyously.

Parties are always great - Gather some old friends who are still "alone" to have a great party. We don't have a lover, but we have friendship, which also warms our hearts.

Hanging out - Head into the cinema and see a touching and sad story. Stepping out of cinema, the air is so fresh and encouraging, and you know you have never had such a bright and cheerful mood.

Online Chatting - You might choose to connect yourself to the Internet during the day. Who knows, your life might be changed?

Climbing mountains - On top of a mountain you'll get the freshest air and do some personal thinking about your life. Encourage yourself by vowing to yourself that you can lead a better life.

Swimming - You might love the feeling your skin being caressed by the warm water. Take a deep breath and show off your swimming skill. You'll find your self-value after raising your head out the water.

Shopping - Buy something that you have been coveting for a long time.

A Broad Sense of Valentine's Day

Today, Valentine messages of love are sent to almost everyone or anyone a person cares to reveal their feelings to. Valentine cards are sent to husbands, wives, mothers, fathers, sons, daughters, relatives, and even special or casual friends, in addition to the truly "beloved sweetheart" or to the secretly, "admired" one. Thus, if you don't have a lover, show love to those people you care most about and thank them for their care for you. You will also have a wonderful Valentine's Day.

Business Service 商务服务



PRE-MEDIA

PRE-MEDIA

北京旁美广告有限公司独家代理“商务服务”专版广告。我们的宗旨是为国内的商务服务及代理机构能够和外商公平、合理地开展合作。从起到桥梁和纽带的作用。

BEIJING PRE-MEDIA Advertising Co., Ltd. is the exclusive advertising agency of the Business Service page of «Beijing Today». We will play the bridge on the cooperation between business service company of our country and foreign business.

AD PLACE (广告内容)

- ◆ 涉外代理工商注册、税务服务、商标、专利等代理注册事宜
Business surrogate relate to foreigner, enterprise registration, tax service, trademark, patent and copyright registration, etc.
- ◆ 商务培训、合作
Business training and cooperation
- ◆ 国际交通运输
International transport
- ◆ 技术、文化交流
Technique and culture communication
- ◆ 国际招商、投资、融资
International investigation and financing
- ◆ 商务咨询、顾问、公关、代理
commercial consultation, public relationship and surrogate
- ◆ 商务办公会议、商务旅游
Business meeting, office and business tour
- ◆ 商务办公设备
Office equipment

广告刊登电话 AD.PLACE.TEL: (86) 010-88552079/80 13601226884

AD.E-mail: premedia@263.net

BUSINESS AGENT



北京市商标事务所

BEIJING TRADEMARK AGENCY

TEL: 68083066 68081369
FAX: 68081370
地址: 北京市西城区月坛北街2号
月坛大厦6层
16th Floor Yue tan Tower
No.2 Yue Tan North Street
Xicheng District Beijing

BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES

A Five-year-old Advertising company

Possess of certain marketing resource, plan to invest exhibition, design & produce. Now looking for foreign capital to joint venture and cooperation.

Aim

- ◆ Introducing advantage experiences and technologies from design and produce of overseas exhibitions.
- ◆ Introducing trademark, administration and marketing promotion from overseas exhibitions vocation.
- ◆ Introducing certain quantity capital to enlarge scale.

Welcome to connect to us.

Tel: 13701378266

Huiyuan Apartments

ready to rent

With high, medium and economy standard.

Broadband multi-media e-commerce net service in each flat.

Welcome your visit.

Tel: 64923528/64923529

64992660/64910545



Let us help you to extend your visa or change visa status
Tel: 65674187
Mobile: 13001039008 13910101133
(San Ze synthesize Trading)
三泽综合商社

北京工商事务咨询服务中心

BEIJING CONSULTING SERVICE CENTER FOR INDUSTRIAL AND COMMERCIAL AFFAIRS

业务范围: 承办国内外企业登记注册代理业务、外国企业常驻代表机构审批、登记注册的代理业务。

The center handles applications for enterprise and foreign enterprise permanent office in Beijing registration.

地址: 北京市海淀区三里河1号西苑饭店7号楼107-109室
RM107-109, NO.7, XIYUAN HOTEL, NO.1, SANLIHELU, HAI DIAN, BEIJING.
电话: 68313388 转 57107-57109 88371521 传真: 68342761 联系人: 周研、孙霞、任民



BeiJing PRE-MEDIA Advertising Company

A well-known professional company
We provide following services:

- ★ Market strategy, promotion and design, Boutique agency
- ★ Advertisement Management of plane Media, TV advertisement
- ★ Buying Representative

Quality service obtain honour welcome to consultation

TEL: 88552081

FAX: 88552079

MOBILE: 13601226884

E-mail: pieere@sina.com

Konica 高品质 数字化复印机 Konica 7045



主要性能:
* 复印/打印速度: 45 张/分
* 600 X 600 dpi 输入和输出
* 图形用户界面
* 首张复印输出时间: 3.9 秒
* 预热时间: 少于 90 秒
* 32MB 标准存储器 E-RDH

KEY FEATURES:

- > 45 cpm/ppm
- > 600 X 600 dpi for Input & Output
- > Graphic User Interface
- > FCOT: 3.9 Seconds
- > WUT: Less than 90 Seconds
- > 32MB Standard Memory E-RDH

BEIJING ZHONGONG KONICA PRODUCTS AGENT CO., LTD

Tel: 63465432 63464797 MP: 13901151799 维修热线: 63448206 Post: 100054
Add: Room 3A407, Pengrun Jiayuan (鹏润家园), Caihuiyong Cloverleaf Junction, Fengtai District, Beijing, China



For Couples

For those who want to make this Valentine's Day one to remember.

By Jiao Pei / Wang Dandan

Jack in the early morning

Roses

Jack wants to buy a special rose for the real Rose. The new type of Blue Times shows the soft color of light purple. It's almost the most fragrant rose in the market. Roses dusted with golden powder are completely gold in color. And the Black Rose is very popular this year. It is not totally black, just like a red rose covered with a thin black gauze.

Where to buy:

Huixinjili Flower Garden, 47 Laitai Flower Street, 9 Maizidian Xilu, Chaoyang District, 84541071. Jintaihua Flower Shop, 39 Laitai Flower Street, 64635588-2816. Wennyu Lingzhu Flower Shop, 25 Laitai Flower Street.

Beijing Flower Exchange Center: 8 Beilu, east Third Ring Road. Tel: 65042443 64653591

Ordering online is also possible: www.Chinaflowercenter.com, 84634451.

Jack at 10am-12am

Selecting a Valentine's Present

Exchanging presents is essential for improving lovers' relationships! But what kind of present to give this year? Jack has many ideas in his mind. Which one is the best?

Diamonds

Diamond, the strongest stone in the world, symbolic of everlasting love. Jack thinks diamonds are connected with the stars in those magazines, and if lovers make a vow when giving the diamond, it seems so romantic!

Forever Diamond - Happy Wishes, 305# Tower C, 1 Xiwuji, Sanlitun, Chaoyang District, 84514480. Website: www.forever-club.com

Hengxin Diamond Palace - Lovers Picking Stars Night.

The two diamonds are branded Forever Diamond. One is 7999 yuan. The other is 9999 yuan.

Enter the lucky draw (to be drawn on February 14 of course!)

Add: AA29, Oriental Plaza, Wangfujing, Dongcheng District. Tel: 65229551.

Horse Design Jewelry & Toys

The year of the horse is coming, and horse always means energetic and successful future. Maybe Jack should give Rose an elegant piece of jewelry or clothing featuring a horse. There are many such designs available this year.

Cotton-cloth horse, Citron Pavilion, B-28B, -1 F Kerry Center, 1 Guanghualu, 85299497.



Leather horse decoration, Liu Zaiping Leather Shop, NB112, World Trade Center Shopping Mall, 1 Jianguomenwai Dajie, 13611252929.

Horse cotton hangings, Sophies's Dining Room, 1 Nongzhanguan Nanlu, south of the west gate of Chaoyang Park, 65066386.

Horse paper-cuts, Tianyu Market, northeast of Tuanjihu Lukou.

Horse head ornaments, Italian, Sogo, Xuanwumen.

Horse pattern carpets, wooden horse ornaments, Ikea Home Furnishings, Madian.

Perfume - The Fragrance of Love

Perfume always arouses sweet feelings between lovers. Different perfumes create different moods. Hugo Deep Red and Hugo Dark Blue are two kinds for men and women. According to the advertising, Dark Blue, for men, turns day to night. Deep Red is for women who are witty, outspoken and feel free to express their passions.

Hugo and Little Black Dress are selective brands.

String of Pearls

The most popular personal adornment in the coming spring. Soft-colored pearls, whether worn around the neck, wrist, or waist, will certainly add brilliance to a beautiful woman.

Jiayi Clothes Plaza, opposite Kunlun Hotel, Li-



angmahe.

Special Candle Different colored candles show different moods.

Pacific Century Place, west of Zhao-long Hotel, Gongtibeilu, Chaoyang District.

Rose at 10am-12am

Selecting a Valentine's Present

Something Matching for Lovers

Rose is not good at selecting presents for men. This time, she believes a lovers' pair of necklaces or watches could make a suitable gift. Wearing a matching necklace or watch, Rose would feel a connection with Jack, even though they were apart.

Pirate Boat, Oriental Plaza, Xin Dong An Market, around 100 yuan.

Chocolate Special

Ferrero Rocher chocolate: at the heart of a Ferrero Rocher is a whole roasted hazelnut and creamy chocolate filling inside a light crispy wafer wrapped in milk chocolate and chocolate hazelnut.



Ferrero Rocher chocolates can be found in almost every supermarket.

A newly opened chocolate shop, Valentino, -1F, Oriental Plaza.

Cadbury chocolate with coffee or hazelnut center.

Valentine's Day Cake, Kiss'n Bake, -1F Oriental Plaza, 13911317246.

Jack and Rose at 2pm



Walking Outside

The warm winter this year offers many opportunities for lovers to enjoy some outside activities. There are many spots in Beijing suitable for a romantic meeting.

One such place is Shishahai (Houhai). Prince Gong's mansion, the residence of Song Qingling, the Xu Beihong Museum, as well as many small bars hidden among the common houses.

The Residence of Prince Gong: There is an exhibition of folk toys here till February 26. Open 6:30pm-9:30pm, 66116051.

Residence of Song Qingling Bars: Buddha Bar, Yingdingqiao, facing Kaorouji, Xicheng District, noon-late, 66179488.



The Left Bank, Shishahai, 11 Qianhaibeian, northwest side of Qianhai, 3:30pm-2am.

No Name Bar, 3 Qianhaidongyan, next to Kaorouji Restaurant, noon-late, 64018541.

Jack and Rose also like to walk along the city moat of the Forbidden City.

Department Stores and Teahouses or Cafes

Sogo is a popular shopping spot for girls. Many middle-level brands are gathered here, and Xianzonglin Teahouse is just 100 meters to the north.

Pacific Century Place and Duobo Cafe, 6 Gontixilu, south of the west gate of Gongti, 65521428.

Wangfujing and Donghuamen Snacks Street.

Sports-fitness in, Chocolate out

New ideas are also important. Maybe walking along the streets or killing time in teahouses hasn't any freshness. So doing some exercise is also a good idea.

Jack decides to bungee jump at the Olympic Center, then swim for an hour. After that, they will have dinner at a Japanese restaurant.

Beijing Olympic Center:

Add: Beisihuan Zhonglu, Andingmenwai Dajie, Chaoyang District. Tel: 64912233.

Evolution Fitness Center, Feb. "Lover's Month", any couple can join up without paying the usual joining fee. Adria restaurant coupon included. 65070266.

Chatting in Tea House

Shopping is also good for lovers. Holding hands and walking among the flowing crowds, such an experience may make lovers realize the importance of each other in a my-



riad of people. Jack and Rose might pause at a teahouse nearby.

Kezhongzuo Tea House

It mixes the western and eastern factors. 1F, Guanghua Xijiu, Guanghua Donglu, 65830451.



Shirang Tea House

A cosy, romantic house, which is fashionable and has a feeling of culture. A2, Qijiahuozi, Haidian District, 62042330.

Shuidanqing Tea House (Water Red & Blue)

A quiet place for lovers. north of the east gate of Jiangshan Park, Jingshan Dongjie.

Photo by East / Chen Shuyi / Qu Liyan

Photo Provided by Ray / Forever Diamond

DIY For Valentine's Day

By Wang Dandan

Rose and Jack finally decided to cook dinner themselves. Jack will cook and Rose will wash the dishes. The most important thing they must not forget to buy is a candle! Under the flickering candle light, with soft music, two smiling faces gaze at one another and two hearts meet.

Yunnan Rice Noodles, warm love kept forever.

Long ago, a man studied in a solitary place in the mountain, in order to be away from the city noise. His wife, who brought him meals every day, came up with a wonder-

ful dish that would keep warm as she carried it to him. She boiled hot chicken soup and poured it over the rice noodles, the film of oil from the soup prevented the heat from escaping, keeping the noodles beneath warm.

Put ham in the soup and pour it over the rice noodle. Bring the noodle to your lover, and the old story plays over again.

Toffee Apples

This comes from the north-east of China. Fry the apples and dip them into a hot sugar syrup. A

long sugar thread will come out, and you will have to stand on your chair to stretch it till it breaks. Dip the toffee-coated apple into cold

water for second then put it in your mouth! It is cold outside and hot inside. Doesn't it taste like the love? Even love needs to put into cold water sometimes!

Chongqing Hotpot: Hotpot is very hot, but none are hotter than this one.

Even in summer time, Chongqing people like to eat this hotpot. The red soup, which is as red as the sun, scares most people from other cities. After eating this hot pot, will your taste buds ever work again?

Chocolate DIY
White Chocolate Mousse
Cake
4 cups chocolate cookie



crumbs, 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon, 1/2 cup butter, melted, 1510 grams white chocolate, 16 egg yolks, 1 cup butter, softened, 4 cups heavy whipping cream, 2 cups white chocolate chips

Preheat oven to 175 C. In a large bowl, mix cookie crumbs, cinnamon, and melted butter. Press into bottom and 1 cm up sides of 30 cm spring form pan. Bake for 5 to 7 minutes or until firm. Chop the white

chocolate and place it in the top of a double boiler over hot water, stirring frequently. Remove from heat and mix in the egg

yolks. Beat mixture until light and fluffy. Beat in the softened butter. In a large bowl, whip the cream until stiff, and fold into the white chocolate mixture. Fold in the white chocolate chips. Pour into baked crust and chill for 4 hours.

Death by Chocolate

1 package German chocolate cake mix, 1 package instant chocolate pudding mix, 1 2/3 cups milk, 3/4 cup strong brewed coffee, 340 grams frozen whipped topping, thawed, 6 bars chocolate covered toffee bars, frozen and crushed.

Bake cake, according to package directions. Cool and crum-

ble. Make pudding, according to package directions, with milk.

In a large trifle or other glass serving bowl, place half of the crumbled cake. Pour half of the coffee over the cake, spread half the pudding over that, and top with half the whipped topping sprinkled with half the crumbled candy bars. Repeat layers. Refrigerate until serving.

Arrange flowers in a vase. It can fully show people's own creative power. The materials can be bought at 25, Laitai Flower Street, Maizidian Xilu, 13901169483.



By Jiao Pei / Wang Dandan

Jack and Rose at 6:00pm

Dinner at some special restaurant

Rose is not so keen on big restaurants filled with people. She prefers to go to a smaller one. She thinks, if they want to experience fashionable atmosphere, a western restaurant is a good idea. The Rain Forest, BB88, 1F Oriental Plaza, Chang'anjie, Dongcheng District, 11am-11pm, 85186851. Hefengxuan, located near the north gate of Beihai Park, is one of her favorites. Hefengxuan serves dishes from the southern part of China. The taste is a little sweet, but very delicate, just like the love between the two. Waitresses there always speak in a soft tone.

Price: about 50 yuan per person.

Add: Di'anmen, 20 Ping'an Dajie.

Open: 11:00 am - 22:00 pm. Tel: 64056957

Another favorite restaurant of Rose's is "Just for You Two", one of the smallest restaurants in Beijing.



It has only one dinner table, and serves French cuisine. Wine-colored walls, cream sofa chairs, dim lights and soft music...so romantic, so French!

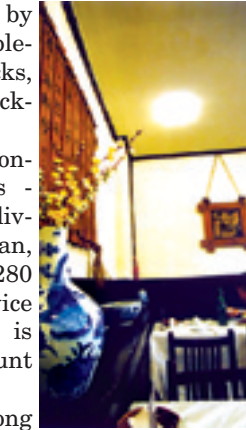
Here customers can design the ambience for their special dinner themselves, by choosing the tablecloth, candlesticks, even the background music.

Price: traditional baked snails - 65 yuan, goose liver pate - 60 yuan, set menu 180-280 yuan (15% service charge). There is also a 35% discount for students.

Add: 49 Xisidong dajie, Xicheng District, bus 101, 103, 850 or 814 to Xisi, 50 meters east of Shengli Cinema (), north side of the street.

Tel: 66174200. Bookings essential.

Jack has different ideas. He likes vegetarian food and he wants to go to Tanzhesi Temple, where smoking, alcohol, meat and even eggs are strictly forbidden. This place claims to be the purest and cleanest of all Beijing's vegetarian restaurants. The food



is delicious and it boasts beautiful scenery.

How to get there: bus 931 from Pingguoyuan Subway Station or minibus to Tanzhesi Temple.

Entrance: 20 yuan

Price: about 70 yuan per person.

Tel: 69853974; 60862244.

Rose wouldn't mind going there if one of them had a car. But if Jack wants vegetarian food, he will have to find somewhere in the city.

Green Tianshi (vegetarian restaurant)

Location: 57 Dengshikou Dajie, Dongcheng District (opposite Tianlun Dynasty Hotel).

Tel: 65242476

Gongdelin Restaurant, another vegetarian restaurant, 67010807

Hotel Dining

Manhattan Grill, lovers' set dinner, State Guest Hotel, 68005588. Valentine's Day Celebration, roses, wine, candlelight and sumptuous buffet in a romantic atmosphere. Lovers' buffet: 208 yuan per person. Shangri-La Hotel Beijing, Coffee Garden, Feb. 14, 68412211.

Jack and Rose at 7:00pm.

After Dinner Activities For somewhere with a plain and simple atmosphere, where to lovers can snuggle up and watch a movie, Sculpting In Time is a good choice.

Or perhaps to appreciate beautiful music, Jack and Rose can go to a concert.

Sculpting In Time Add: south gate of Ligong Daxue, 7 Baishiqiaolu, Haidian District. Open: 8am-3pm. Average price: 30-50 yuan. Tel: 68946825.



For the Valentine's Day Space for Imagination Coffee House, 5 Xiwangzhuang, Haidian District, Feb. 14, 3pm, reservation tel, 62791280.

Eden Candlelight Evening Dinner Concert

Violinist Sheng Zhongguo, pianist Huang Yameng.

Where: Century Theater, Feb. 14, 7:30pm, 180-580 yuan, 64660032.

Rose Date - Comprehensive Evening Party

Three parts, 10:30pm-12:30am, Chinese Love Songs Chorus Concert, 1am-2:30am, Romantic Lovers Night Dance Party, with live band, 2:30am-6am, two movies, Wedding Singer & Shrek.

Where: National Library Concert Hall, 33 Zhonguancun Nandajie, Haidian District.

When: Feb. 14, 10am-Feb. 15,

6am. Admission: 80-200 yuan. Tel: 88545731, 88545501. Rhythm of The Dance Irish dance performance, Tianqiao Theater, Feb. 14, 7:15pm, 120-680 yuan, 65903399, 65903737.

Jack and Rose at 9:30pm

Bars

It must be bustling with noise and excitement in bars at this moment.

The most mysterious bar in Beijing - Fei Hua Lang

Go north along the Sanlitun North Bar Street, turn left at the Italian Restaurant, go 20 meters people will see a board read Cross bar, then still need to turn three corners, a door closed tightly without any board.



The coolest bar - The Loft

The decor features metallic lines and large glass windows. A popular spot for culture vultures, often the scene of art happenings.

4 Gontibeilu, in the alley west of Pacific Century Place. 65017501.

The Lowest-key bar - Club Vogue

It is not bar really, but a club to dance to Techno & House music. Simple appearance and an always closed door give it a slightly mysterious air. 100 meters north of City Hotel, with "88" on the front. 64165316.

The most proud bar - No Name Bar

The patrons must receive the owner's critic eye. If you are considered as a vulgar, you cannot get service there. 3 Qianhaidongyan, next to Kaorouji Restaurant, Xicheng District, 64018541.

The most colorful bar - The String Hobby Bar

The original Auto Parts Street, Sanlitun Nanjie, opposite the Sanlitun North Bar Street, south of the Gold Barn.

The most inciting bar - Li Zheng Bar

The bar owner Li Zheng has engaged in music in Beijing for ten years. He released his album the year before last year.

54 Baishiqiaolu, opposite the National Library.

The most easy bar - Neo Lounge

It offers the easiest space for chatting or just sitting. Patrons are fashionable but friendly! 99 Xingfucun Zhonglu, go north from Club Vogue, turn west at the first intersection, Neo Lounge is on the left. DJ Mark Yu Fei.64161077.

The most crowded bar - May Flower Bar

2 Donglingelu, Fuxingmennei Dajie, Xicheng District, opposite the Minzu Hotel, bus 15, 10 to Minzu Fandian. 5pm-2:30am, 66088122.

The most cultural bar - Sculpting In Time

Students and lecturers from the nearby universities like to go there to read books or watch movies.



South gate of Beijing Ligong Daxue, 68946825.

The cheapest bar - Rain-bow's Time

In fact it is a small shop, which specializes in alcohol and coffee. In summer time, many expats gather around the door to chat.

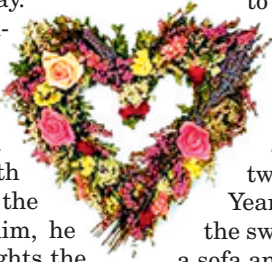
Opposite Dirty Nellie's, Sanlitun South Bar Street, 1pm-3am, 65915811.



Valentine's Day suggestions for lovers on a budget

By Jiao Pei

A college boy wants to give his girlfriend a surprise on Valentine's Day, which coincidentally, is also the girl's birthday. When he arrives downstairs, he phones her and asks her to come out. He goes into the dark alley, holding a small birthday cake with a candle in it. When the girl rushes towards him, he strikes a match and lights the candle. The girl blows it out and all is dark around them. Suddenly, the boy strikes another match, but he just sees two lines of tears on the girl's face. This act cost little money but the result is so effective. So how you spend Valentine's Day needn't cost much, but must be meaningful and carefully thought out. If you plan with care, your idea must be the



best one for your boyfriend or girlfriend.

1. Collect the ticket stubs of all the movies you have been to with your lover, and make a special Valentine's Day card.
2. Take a digital TV camera and film a few minutes of the two of you together. Years later, it might be the sweetest thing to sit on a sofa and watch it together.
3. Roses are the Valentine's day standard, but many less expensive species say "I love you" just as effectively. Check out Laitai Flower Street and Xiangjigian Garden Art Chain Store.
4. Sketch a picture of your lover, sign it and have it framed. Don't let the fact that you are no Renoir deter you. If it is really bad, tell her/him it is

- neo-abstract-impressionism.
5. Write down on a hand made card all the words you want to whisper to your lover but are to shy to say.
6. Practice singing a song or reciting a love poem and surprise your lover with an "impromptu" performance. Remember to bow/courtesy, blow a kiss and mouth the words "I love you" when you finish.
7. The most worthwhile thing to do Take a digital TV camera and film a few minutes of the two of you together. Years later, it might be the sweetest thing to sit on a sofa and watch it together.
8. Do some more meaningful



- things. Donate the money you saved from abstaining on Valentine's Day to the Hope Project.
- Plant some trees and build a green wall for Beijing. Bring green hopes to the next generation and let your love benefit them.
9. Writing letters A written letter, instead of a typed one, serves as a bridge to connect the beloved. On thinking of it, Rose takes out a pen, a bottle of ink, with a layer of dust on the top, and a piece of paper. No need to worry about computer crashes or the network going down.

A must for Lovers - Movie

By Jiao Pei

1. Married couples of many years: Sleepless In Seattle, You've Got Mail, Fiddler on the Roof.
2. Couples married for around seven years: Fatal Attraction, Disclosure, A Perfect Murder, War of the Roses.
3. Newly weds: When Harry Met Sally, The Story of Us, Next Stop Wonderland.
4. Singles: The Wedding Singer, Bachelor, Never Been Kissed, Man on the Moon.
5. Couples with "different" tastes: Maurice, Gods and Monsters, Une Affaire Degout,
6. Lovers in general: Pretty Woman, Notting Hill, The Runaway Bride, My Best Friend's Wedding.
7. Lovers with a difference: The Blue Lagoon, Lorita, 8, Youngsters, Xin Dong.
9. Couples about to separate: American Beauty, Artificial Intelligence, Sleepy Hollow.
10. Nostalgic lovers: Titanic, Meet Joe Black, Always, Somersby.





For Seniors

Valentine's gifts

A Chairman Mao badge might be a cool Valentine's gift for your loved one, if he or she has a penchant for that kind of fashion accessory. You can find these and many other Cultural Revolution relics at places like Liulichang and Panjiayuan market. Often these relics are highly priced fakes, always try to at least halve the first offered price. Following are some more suggestions for Valentine's Day gifts for those past the first blush of youth!



Photo by East

Laotouxie
(Shoes for Seniors)

By Jiang Zhong

Laotouxie are shoes made wholly of homespun cloth. They are also known as Qiancengdi (Multi-layer Sole), because the sole of the shoes are made of many layers of cloth. Neiliansheng Shoe Store (内联升鞋店) at Dashila (大栅栏) is one of the largest and oldest shoe stores in Beijing, and has provided footwear for such luminaries as Chairman Mao Zedong, Premier Zhou Enlai and Deng Xiaoping.

Where: 34 Dashilajie, (just south of Qianmen, Xuanwu District)

Tel: 63013045



Jade bracelet

By Jiang Zhong

Jade bracelets, symbolizing the eternity of love, are very popular with older Chinese women. Beijing Jade Workshop (北京玉器厂) offers a complete line of jade ware. You can order a custom made bracelet or buy one directly from their shop.

Where: 11, Guangminglu (光明路), Chongwen District (崇文区)

Tel: 67149134



Seals

By Jiang Zhong

Seal carving is a traditional craft that has developed along with the evolution of Chinese painting. Various materials, including stone, jade, bone and metal can be used in the production of seals.

Beijing Wenzhengyi (文正义) Seal Carving Service now offers carving in foreign languages. You can have your partner's name carved on a seal as a special memento.

Where: 1, Xinzhongjie Santiao (新中街三条), Dongcheng District

Tel: 64159168

You can also order a seal through their website: www.bjwzy.com

Wang Shangyi, 60, husband, former leader of Beijing Judo Team

Jia Yunli, 57, wife, former chairwoman of the Beijing Sports Committee Labor Union



The couple with their granddaughter

Photo by East

A special Valentine's gift

By Jiang Zhong

Wang Shangyi celebrated his retirement on January 29, 2002. His wife Jia Yunli ended her speech at the ceremony marking the occasion with the hope that their love would last forever. The couple spoke to Beijing Today after the ceremony.

Romance began in a special period of China

Wang was recruited by the Beijing Men's Volleyball Team in 1960. He says that although the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution, that began a few years later, brought him some bad luck, it also brought him another half of his life - his wife.

When Wang first joined the Beijing Men's Volleyball team, contact between male and female athletes was strictly forbidden. However when the Cultural Revolution broke out in mid 1960s, athletes, including Wang and Jia, were freed of this oppressive regulation.

Wang first saw Jia at the sports ground on a cold winter afternoon in 1968, when he and his companions were passing the time by strolling around the training camp.

Wang seemed lost in contemplation when recalling his feelings of his first sight of that young girl. "She was running like a deer", he said, "So swiftly and proudly". The wind seemed not so cold any more, and Wang only wanted to attract her attention. Being shy however, he held his tongue.

He confined himself to the dormitory, however his heart had flown to the attractive girl. Finally an idea that he still considers very smart, even today, rose in his heart.

A special gift on Valentine's Day

Wang learnt about Valentine's Day from a Japa-



1981, before Tian'anmen with their ten-year-old daughter



1969, at Xiannongtan, after a heavy snow



1971, with their daughter, before their home



1974

nese volleyball player who once played in friendly tournament in China. He decided to give Jia a special gift, a self-made badge of the likeness of Chairman Mao Zedong, on the day. That was a very clever idea, he said with a mischievous expression.

Wang was very skilled at this particular craft. He could make three such badges in one hour. Without delay, he first found some pictorial magazines (all such magazines of that period carried numerous portraits of Chairman Mao). He cut several small portraits out, then rushed to a factory nearby, where he knew he could find many round glass tailings.

He put the picture of Chairman Mao between two pieces of glass, and fixed them together with the hot-press. He made ten badges and presented them to Jia that Valentine's Day. Besides Chairman Mao's likeness, he also included stage photos of some famous Chinese operas like The Red Lantern and the White-Haired Girl.

Jia accepted his gift and also his heart. The following year, they made no less than two hundred such badges. Jia collected various beautiful pictures including stage photos from Soviet Union movies, landscapes and calligraphy works, and Wang made badges with the materials she found.

The special gift would come back this Valentine's Day

Since they were married in early 1970, Wang has made no more such badges. However, the two have not stopped celebrating Valentine's Day, and every February 14, they bicycle out of town for a picnic. Wang had decided that he would present a badge to his wife once more this Valentine's Day, however the picture should be the photograph of the whole family, including their newborn granddaughter.

Silver travel for Valentine's Day

By Jiang Zhong

Zhang Rongqin, a retired reporter, now runs a bicycle shop in Chaoyang District. When asked about his plans for Valentine's Day, he didn't answer directly but suggested some places around Beijing where older lovers might like to take a romantic stroll. These areas have long been popular spots for courting, especially before the 1950s. This Valentine's Day in Beijing, you and your loved one could plan a romantic outing to one of them.

Wenjin (文津) Street

Wenjin Street, the street that runs along the rear of the Forbidden City, is often said to be the most beautiful in Beijing. Running from the National Art Gallery to Xi'anmen Street, it is the site of many important historical relics, such as the Red Tower of Peking University, the two northern towers of the Forbidden City and the White Stupa at Beihai Park. Walking along this street you can surely breathe in the scent of the imperial life.



Photo by East

Shishahai (什刹海)

Shishahai Lake, to the north of Beihai Park, was once an important scenic spot in the old imperial city. The Drum and Bell Towers, Prince Gong's Mansion and the old residences of VIPs are all located in this vicinity. During Spring Festival, a temple fair will be held here, offering a taste of the life of old Beijing.



Photo by East

Chengxian (成贤) Street

Chengxian Street is one of the best-preserved ancient streets in Beijing. It is renowned for the stone archways, the Confucius Temple, the Imperial College and the Lama Temple.

The Imperial College was the most important college during the Yuan, Ming and Qing dynasties. It is now a branch of the Capital Library.

The Confucius Temple was constructed to honor China's most renowned educator. The grand complexes of the temple are all intact.

Opposite the eastern end of the street stands Beijing's biggest Tibetan Buddhism temple, the Yonghegong, or Lama temple, featuring examples of Han, Manchu and Tibetan style architecture. During spring festival, special Buddhist religious ceremonies will be held here.

You can walk or bicycle through any of these areas. If want to rent a bicycle, you can contact Zhang at 65070541, he will be pleased to assist.

Valentine's Stories

Drive to Valentine's Day

By Jiang Zhong

A large China map hangs from the ceiling of Wang Tingyu and Tong Fan's home. On the map, five bold red lines radiating out from Beijing indicate all the places the happy couple have visited in their minivan. In three years, the couple's journeys have covered 21 provinces.

Wang says that he had dreamt of traveling around China with his wife for a long time. In 1997 his son gave him an old van, or "miandi" as they are known to Beijingers. Wang didn't know how to drive then, so he registered with a driving school. The next autumn, after half a year's practice, he and his wife began their first car tour to Chengde in Hebei Province, without informing their children.

Each time they return to Beijing, they tell their children only the interesting experiences, but omit the difficulties encountered en route. Tong says that the minivan has become their second home. Their adventures can be compared to their life experience; though hard, they can always find pleasure in it.

To celebrate Valentine's Day this time, they will drive all the way to Hainan Province, in southern China. Wang said, "For us every day is a Valentine's celebration, because we are always together in the small world, that is most important."

Clone me for you

By Jiang Zhong

He Lancheng, a retired mineworker, was diagnosed with severe nephritis a year ago. Since then his wife has escorted him to a clinic for treatment every two days. The regular treatment costs around three thousand yuan per month.

His wife is tireless in her efforts to stop him dwelling too much on the negative effects of his illness. She sometimes invites her husband's former colleagues to play chess with him. Their children also come to visit at least once a week.

Their grandson gave the couple a suggestion to have their hands "cloned" (actually a kind of plaster cast) to celebrate Spring Festival some days ago. He Lancheng didn't consider it a good idea, but when the reporter told him about Valentine's Day, he decided to take up the suggestion. "But I'd like to have my face 'cloned' for my wife. In the face no one can read the expression of desperation and weakness," he added.

Pine trees stand for the eternity of love



Jiang's drawing of a pine tree at Tai Mountain

By Jiang Zhong

Like other Chinese men of sixty or more, pine tree drawing enthusiast Jiang Changhang seldom mentions the word "love" to his wife. He also didn't know about Valentine's Day before the reporter asked him about his plan for the coming festival.

He sat silently for few seconds before giving his answer. Jiang has been drawing pine trees for nearly forty years, and has visited most of the famous mountains in China in search of subjects.

"Maybe I should give her my drawing collection," he said.

His wife always complains that he spends too much time away from home while she is burdened with all the housework. Jiang says she has the right to see what he has been doing during these years. He plans to pick out the best of his works and present them to his wife.